
CHILDREN OF THE WHALES
3
ABI UMEDA



Story and Art by Abi Umeda

Volume

3



Characters

On the Mud Whale



Ouni
(Marked, 16 years old)

A very powerful thymia user and the leader of the Moles, a group of delinquents on the Mud Whale.



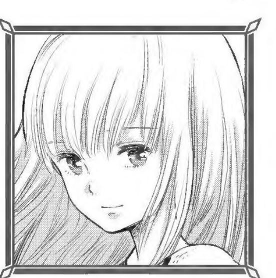
Lykos
(Marked, 14 years old)

A girl from the Allied Empire who comes aboard the Mud Whale. She has a connection with Chakuro.



Chakuro
(Marked, 14 years old)

The young archivist of the Mud Whale. He has hypergraphia, a disorder that compels him to record everything.



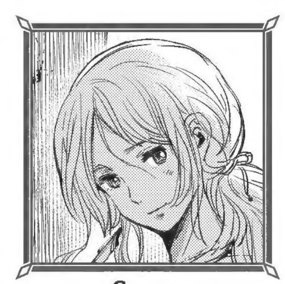
Neri
(???)

Caretaker of the tower where the Committee of Elders lives. She reveals her mysterious, boundless powers to Chakuro.



Sami
(Marked, 13 years old)

Chakuro's childhood friend. Died during the apátheia attack.



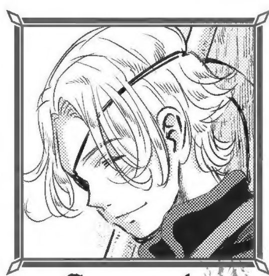
Suou
(Unmarked, 17 years old)

The new mayor of the Mud Whale. He defies the Committee of Elders' orders and is thrown in jail.



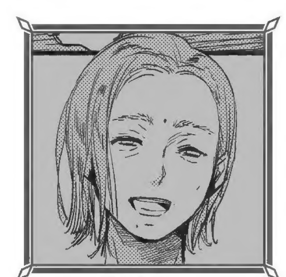
Ginshu
(Marked, 16 years old)

Serves in the Vigilante Corps. She has feelings for Chakuro.



Commander
(Marked, 25 years old)

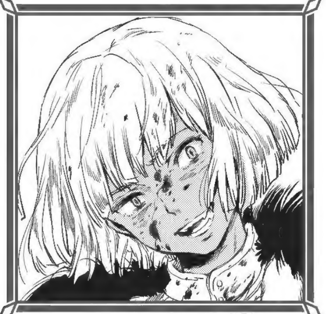
Head of the Vigilante Corps. As powerful as Ouni.



Taisha
(Unmarked, 42 years old)

Former figurehead mayor of the Mud Whale. Died during the apátheia attack.

From the Allied Empire



Liontari

An apátheia who has excessive emotions. He grew up with Lykos.



Orca

Commander of the apátheia forces that attacked the Mud Whale. Lykos's older brother.



A Record of the Mud Whale and the Sea of Sand



Year 93 of the Sand Exile.

The Mud Whale drifts endlessly through the Sea of Sand, home to about 500 people who know nothing of the outside world.

The Marked are those who can wield thymia, a psychic power fueled by emotion. They die young, around the age of 30. Those who have no thymia are called the Unmarked.

Chakuro, the Mud Whale archivist, meets Lykos one day on an abandoned island-ship found floating near theirs. At first she is as cold as a doll, but she eventually opens up to the children on the Mud Whale.

Suddenly, the Mud Whale is attacked by emotionless apátheia soldiers. Chakuro's childhood friend Sami and many others die in the assault. The Committee of Elders, which holds all the real power on the Mud Whale, decides to sink the island into the Sea of Sand rather than allow a second apátheia attack!

Neri reveals the committee's plans and her mysterious powers to Chakuro, Lykos and Ouni, but what can children do?

"The Mud Whale was our entire world."

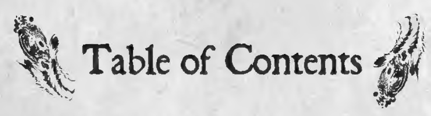


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Choosing Paradise

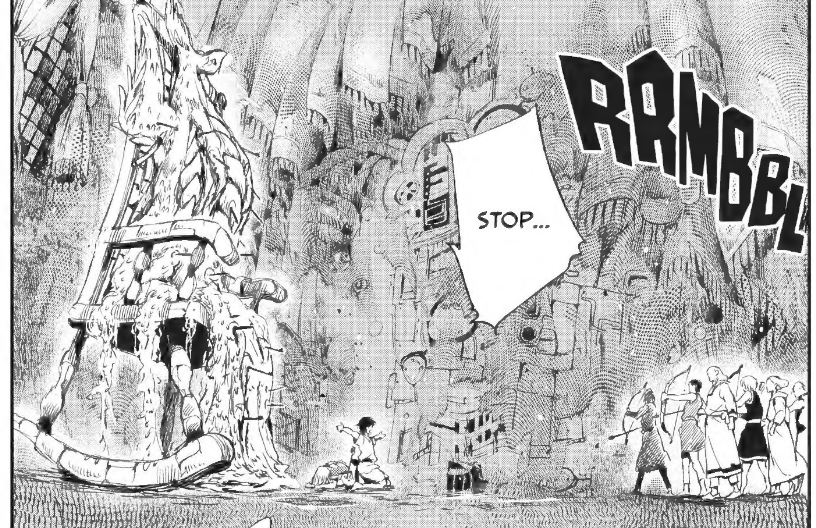

DMM MMMM

THOK
THOK
THOK



KYUUU

LYKOS !!


RRMBBL
STOP...


PLEASE STOP!


DASH
YOU IDIOTS!
NO MATTER WHAT THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS SAYS...
...HOW CAN YOU FIRE ON ONE OF YOUR OWN?!


WHY?
WHY ...
WHY DOES THE CHILD FROM THE STRANGE ISLAND WANT TO STOP US?


ISN'T SHE...
...ONE OF THE SOLDIERS TRYING TO OBLITERATE US?
IF WE DESTROY FÁLAINA, THE MUD WHALE AND ALL THOSE WHO LIVE HERE...
...WILL SINK.


ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU PEOPLE WANT?!


SWAY
LYKOS.
DON'T MOVE.


I...
... DON'T WANT THAT.


YOU'RE NOT CRIMINALS.
I THINK YOU'RE...
...THE WORLD'S HOPE.

THAT'S WHAT I THINK...
...NOW.
WE ...
WE ARE HOPE ...?
HOW LUDICROUS.
WE HAVE LIVED WITH THE BURDEN OF THIS CRIME FOR A HUNDRED YEARS...


THE ONLY WAY TO ESCAPE OUR SUFFERING NOW IS TO END IT PERMANENTLY!
WHO DECIDED THAT?!
!
DO YOU THINK THAT TAISHA, SAMI AND EVERYONE ELSE WHO WAS KILLED...
...WERE CRIMINALS WHO DESERVED TO DIE?
DO YOU THINK THAT WAS A *GOOD* THING?

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE PAST...

...OR THE PEOPLE WHO ATTACKED US...

YOU SAY THERE'S NO HOPE.

BUT LYKOS CAME FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD...

...AND SHE GREW TO LIKE THE MUD WHALE.

ISN'T *THAT* HOPE?

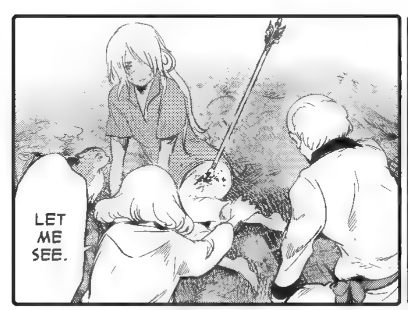
ONE DAY...

...WON'T OTHER PEOPLE FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD COME TO DO THE SAME?

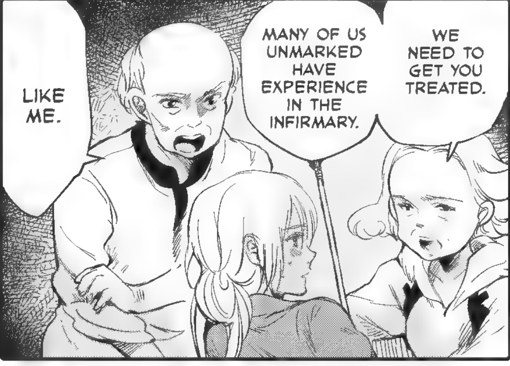



I DON'T WANT TO RUN AWAY...
...WHEN THERE'S STILL HOPE!
I'M GOING TO PROTECT LYKOS AND EVERY-ONE ELSE, NO MATTER WHAT!


NO!
OUT OF MY WAY!
YOU'RE JUST A CHILD.
SHUT UP.
HAVE YOU FORGOT-TEN...
...THE TERROR OF THE ATTACK?
SLAY FÁLAINA!
HURRY!
GRAB
...
SHOOT ...!


LET ME SEE.

DASH
DASH

ELDERS ...

WE NEED TO GET YOU TREATED.
MANY OF US UNMARKED HAVE EXPERIENCE IN THE INFIRMARY.
LIKE ME.

IT WASN'T AN EASY DECISION TO MAKE...
...BUT HADN'T WE RESIGNED OUR-SELVES TO IT?

HAKUJI ...
I'M SORRY.

...
WHY DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND ...?


NERI.
SHU
I'M SORRY.
I'M THE ONE WHO CALLED THEM HERE.
WHY?
I'VE BEEN A NUISANCE TO YOU FOR A LONG TIME.
NERI!
FWISH


I'm sorry...
...mama.
SHNK


ZSSH
THE SHAKING STOPPED?


DID HE... ...DO IT?
OH WELL...
...LOOKS LIKE THE OLD FOLKS GOT SCARED AT THE LAST MINUTE.
!
YOUR ...
... EYE ...
THIS IS A FALSE PARADISE.
EVERYTHING DECAYS IN THE END.

THE CHILDREN OF THE WHALE...
...ARE BORN CURSED.
THAT'S WHY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUCH A RELIEF...
...TO BE RID OF THIS ROTTING BODY AND USELESS HEART.
...

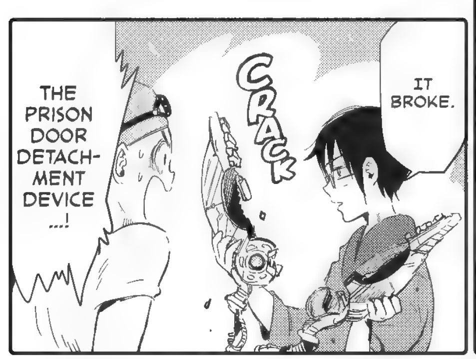

TELL ME...
WILL MY BODY—


OUR SHOWDOWN WILL HAVE TO WAIT FOR ANOTHER DAY.
TONK


YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO RATION YOUR PLEASURES...
IF I HAVE TO KEEP LIVING, I DON'T WANT LIFE TO BE BORING.
CLATTER




WHAT WAS ALL THAT SHAKING?
OH...

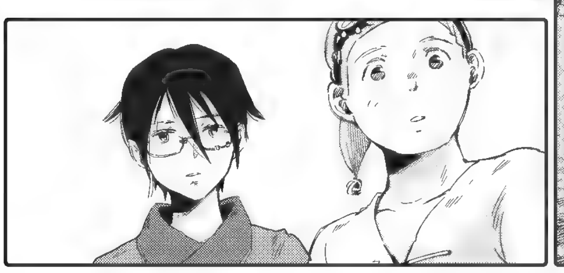

IT BROKE.
CRACK
THE PRISON DOOR DETACHMENT DEVICE ...!

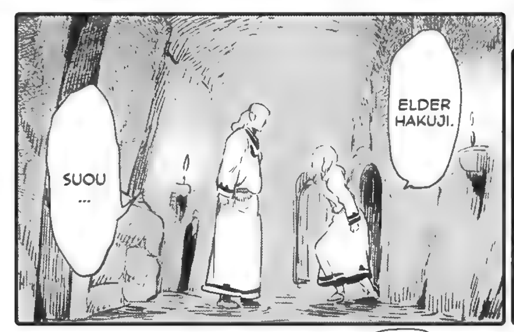

RO, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
NOW WE CAN'T HELP SUOU!

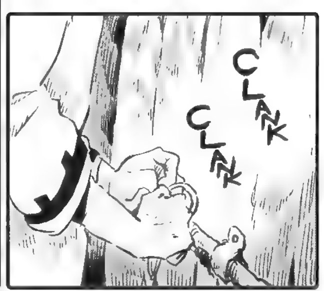

WELL, IF SOMEONE HADN'T ...
...LANDED ON ME...
SHUT UP!

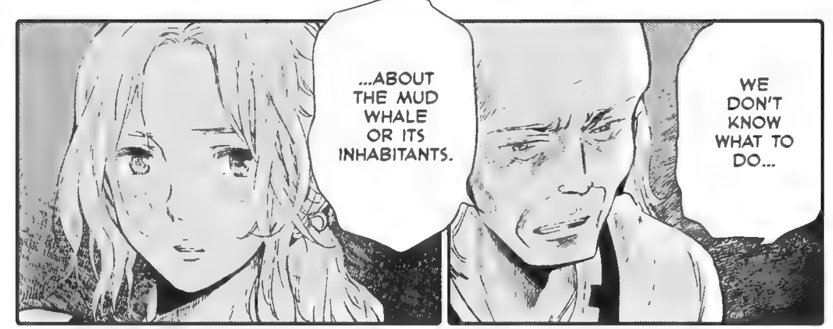

OH!






ELDER HAKUJI.
SUOU ...


CLANK
CLANK


WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
...ABOUT THE MUD WHALE OR ITS INHABITANTS.

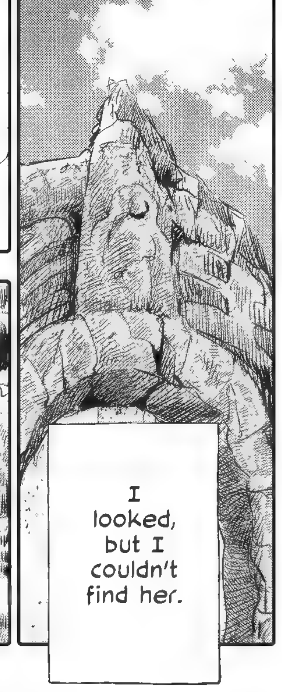
WE DON'T KNOW ANY-MORE...

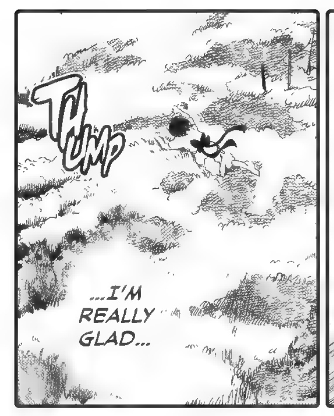
Where had Neri disappeared to?

KSSH

IT'S CRUMBLIER...





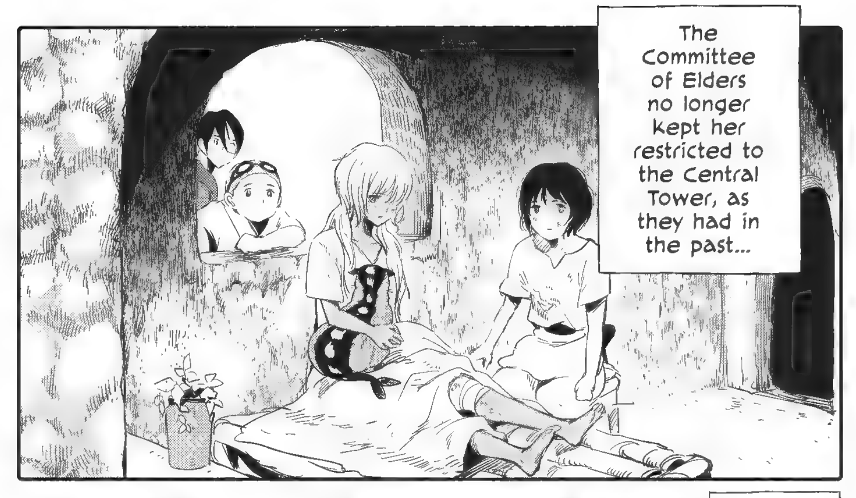






...THAT THE MUD WHALE IS STILL HERE.

Lykos was taken to the infirmary for treatment.



TAK TAK

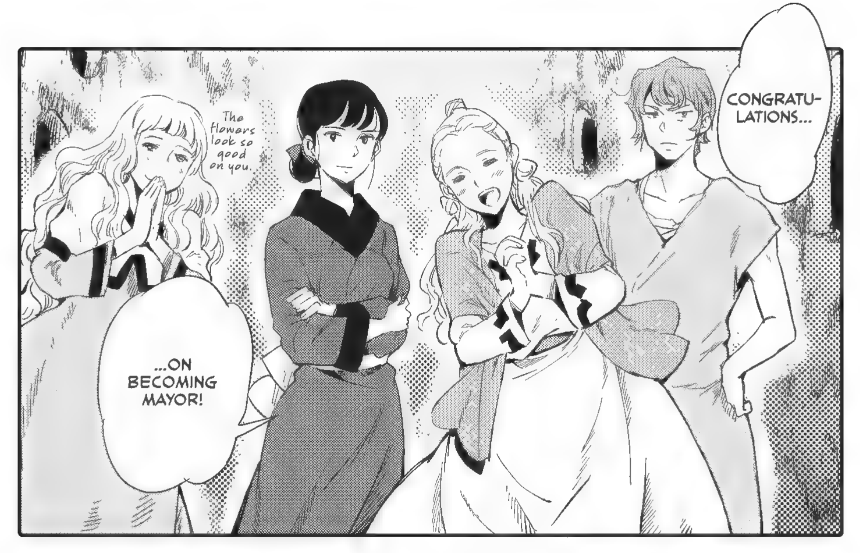
...they hadn't made any decisions beyond postponing the mass suicide.

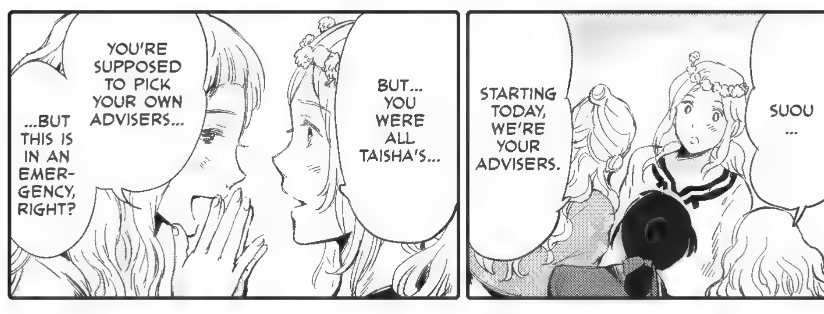
...and they once again lapsed into silence.

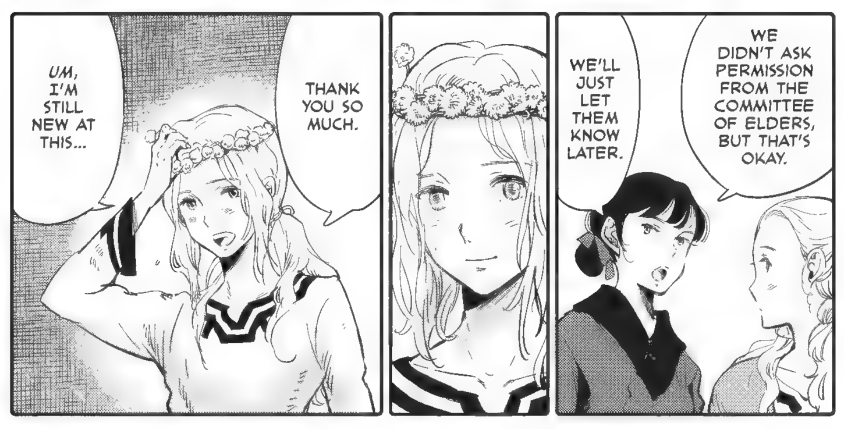
PLOP

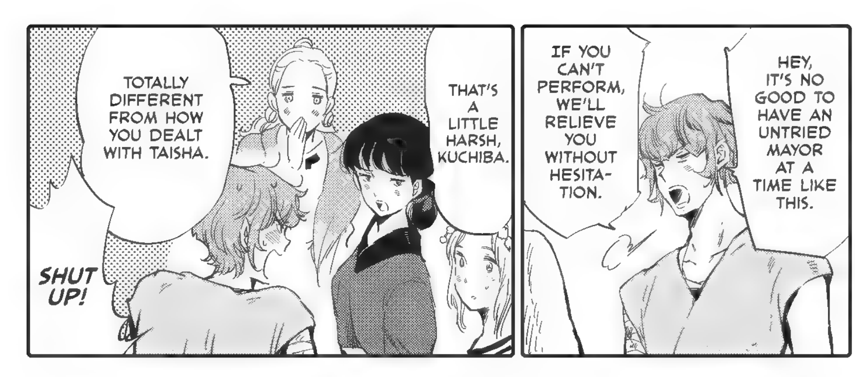
!

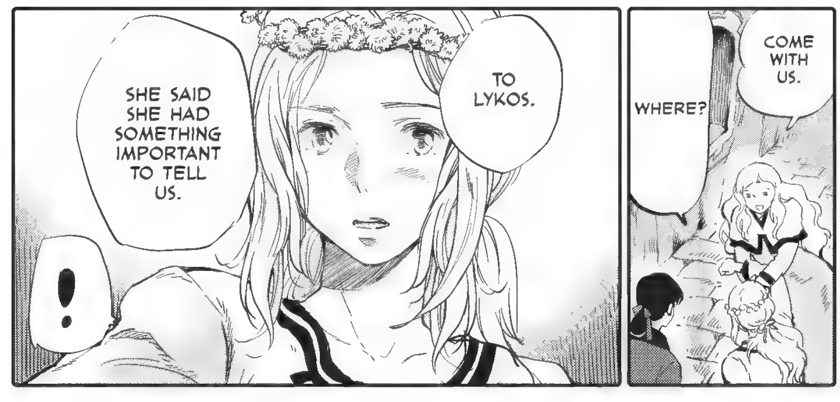
With the Skyros attack just four days away...

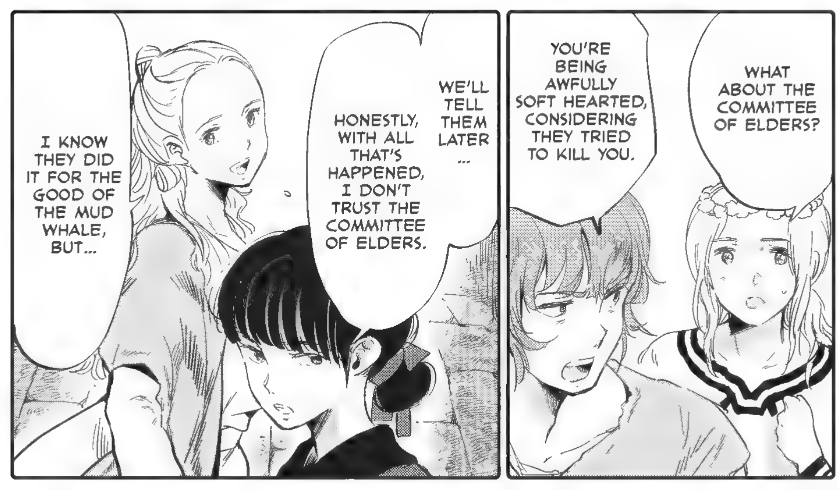

CONGRATULATIONS...
...ON BECOMING MAYOR!
The flowers look so good on you.


SUOU...
STARTING TODAY, WE'RE YOUR ADVISERS.
BUT... YOU WERE ALL TAISHA'S...
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO PICK YOUR OWN ADVISERS...
...BUT THIS IS IN AN EMERGENCY, RIGHT?

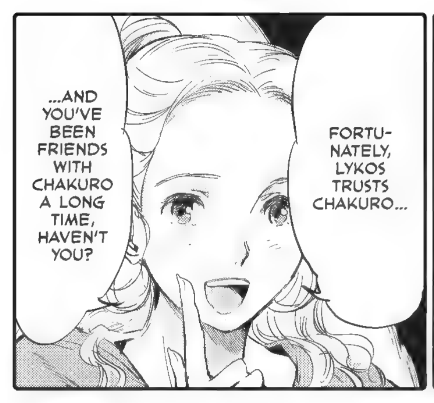

WE DIDN'T ASK PERMISSION FROM THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS, BUT THAT'S OKAY.
WE'LL JUST LET THEM KNOW LATER.
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
UM, I'M STILL NEW AT THIS...


HEY, IT'S NO GOOD TO HAVE AN UNTRIED MAYOR AT A TIME LIKE THIS.
IF YOU CAN'T PERFORM, WE'LL RELIEVE YOU WITHOUT HESITA-TION.
THAT'S A LITTLE HARSH, KUCHIBA.
TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM HOW YOU DEALT WITH TAISHA.
SHUT UP!

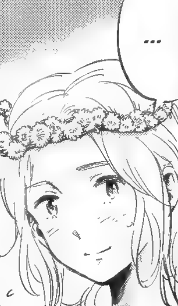

COME WITH US.
WHERE?
TO LYKOS.
SHE SAID SHE HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL US.
!

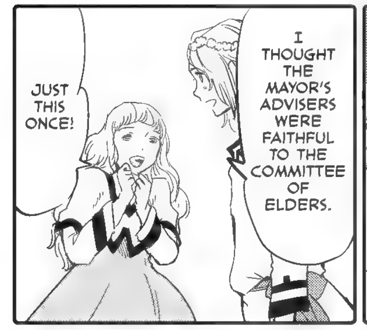

WHAT ABOUT THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS?
YOU'RE BEING AWFULLY SOFT HEARTED, CONSIDERING THEY TRIED TO KILL YOU.
WE'LL TELL THEM LATER ...
HONESTLY, WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, I DON'T TRUST THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS.
I KNOW THEY DID IT FOR THE GOOD OF THE MUD WHALE, BUT...

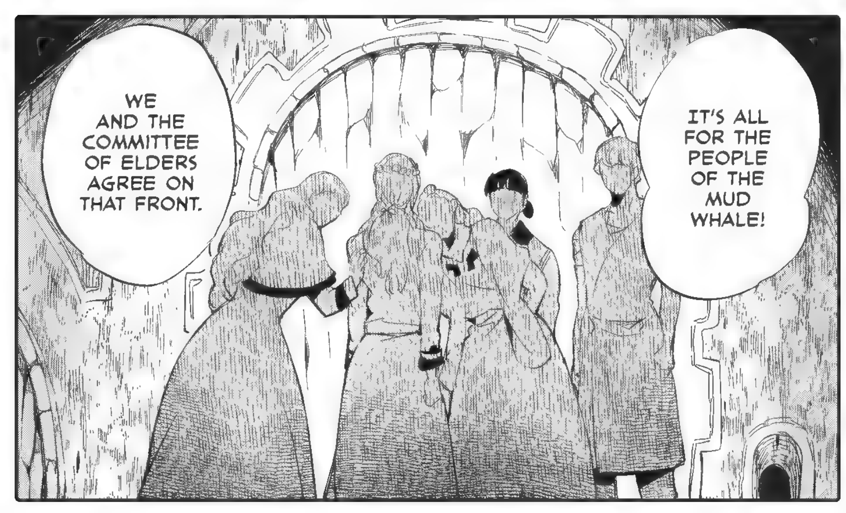

...SHOULD WE BE FRACTURING AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
WE'RE JUST GETTING INFORMATION.


FORTUNATELY, LYKOS TRUSTS CHAKURO...
...AND YOU'VE BEEN FRIENDS WITH CHAKURO A LONG TIME, HAVEN'T YOU?


IT'S SAFE TO SAY LYKOS IS ON OUR SIDE.

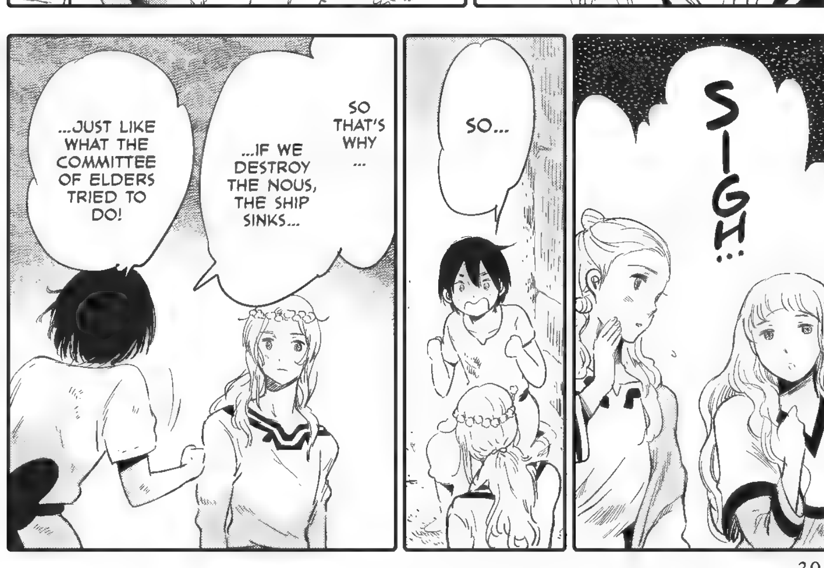

...


I THOUGHT THE MAYOR'S ADVISERS WERE FAITHFUL TO THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS.
JUST THIS ONCE!


IT'S ALL FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE!
WE AND THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS AGREE ON THAT FRONT.

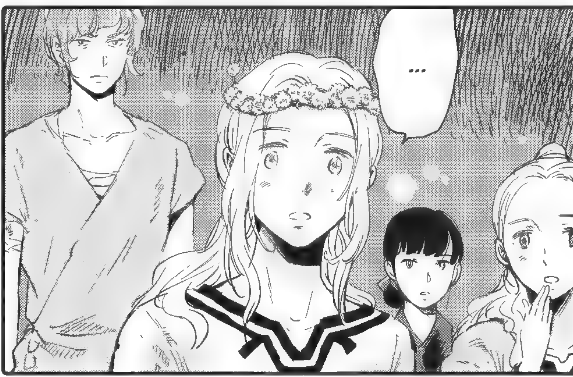
SO ALL SHIPS THAT SAIL ON THE SEA OF SAND HAVE A NOUS, INCLUDING THE MUD WHALE?

THAT'S RIGHT.



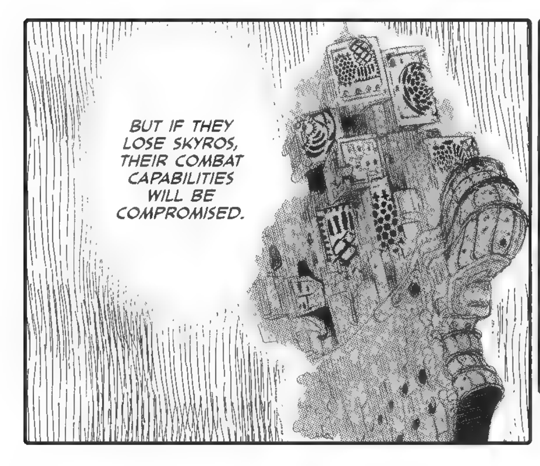
IF WE DESTROY THE NOUS ON THE SHIP THAT ATTACKS US...

...THEN WE CAN DRIVE AWAY THE ENEMY!













SHUT UP, YOU HALF-DEAD LOSER.
RIGHT BACK AT YOU, MEAT-HEAD!
STAY ON TRACK.
PLEASE CONTINUE, LYKOS.
WE HAVE A TOTAL OF EIGHT SHIPS...
...EQUIPPED WITH A NOUS.


YOU HAVE EIGHT SHIPS THAT SIZE?
ONLY EIGHT.
THE NOUSES ARE VERY PRECIOUS...
...BECAUSE THEY CONSUME OUR EMOTIONS.
ONE WHO CONTROLS A NOUS CAN RULE PEOPLE'S HEARTS.
THAT'S WHY MY BROTHER PRIORITIZED RECOVERING LYKOS...
...AND DELAYED THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MUD WHALE BY SEVEN DAYS.
OH YEAH, YOUR SHIP WAS IN TATTERS...
...AND ALL YOUR SHIPMATES DIED.
WHO DID THAT?


!!
THERE ARE LOTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES.
YES.
THERE ARE OTHER COUNTRIES ?!
AN ENEMY COUNTRY.

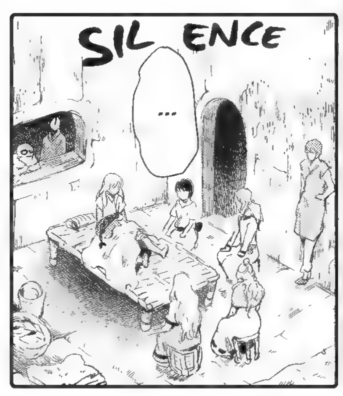

THERE ARE OTHER COUN-TRIES?
MY HEAD HURTS.


THERE ARE LOTS AND LOTS OF COUNTRIES.


YOU HAVE EIGHT BIG SHIPS LIKE THAT...
...FULL OF SOLDIERS.


WOW.
SKETCH SKETCH
I HAVE TO TELL OUNI.







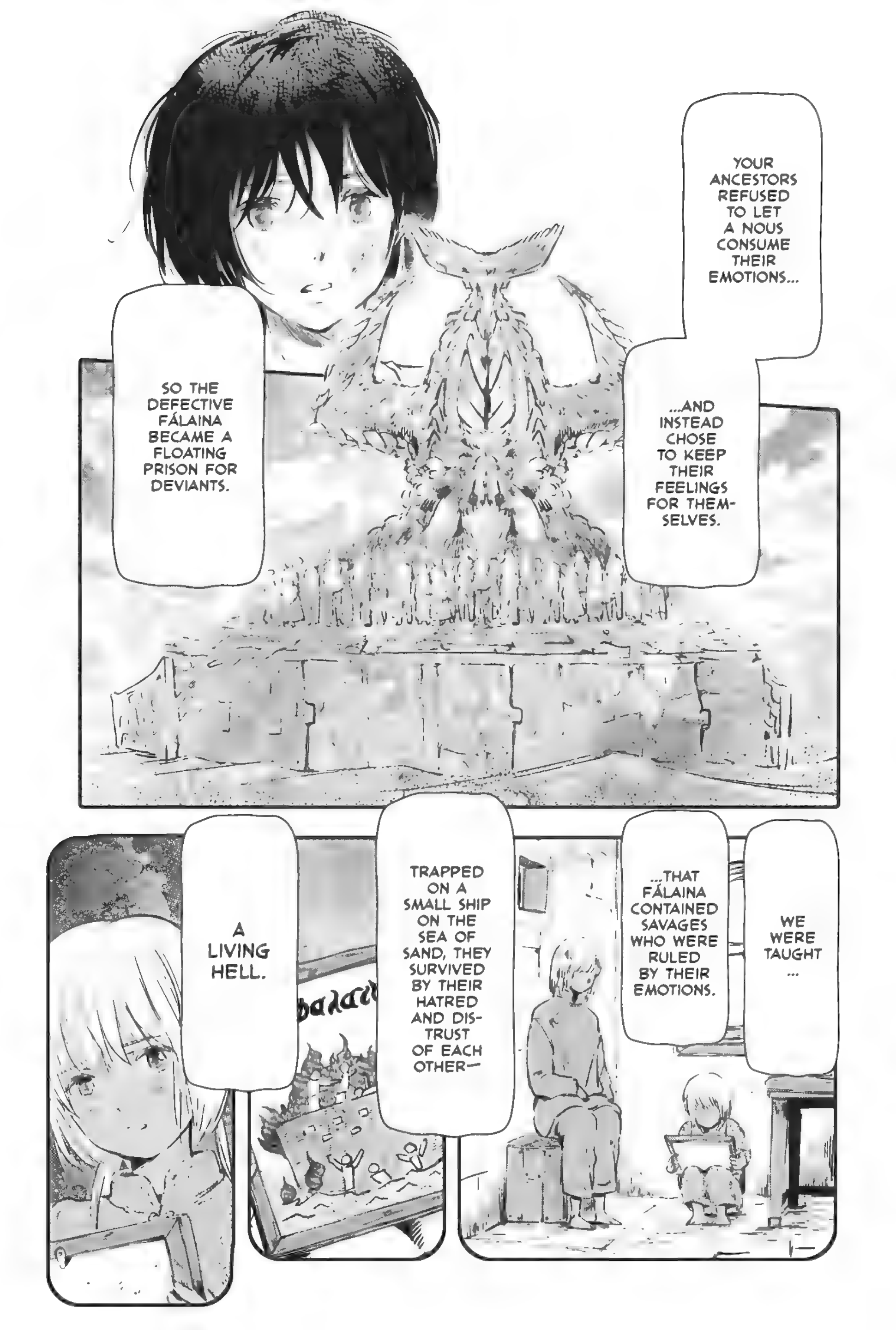
FÁLAINA SERVED AS A PRISON FOR PEOPLE EXILED FROM THE EMPIRE FOR THEIR CRIMES.

THEY SERVED THEIR SENTENCE FOR A LONG TIME ON THE SEA OF SAND.

THE EMPIRE PLANNED TO KEEP FÁLAINA TRAPPED HERE FOREVER.

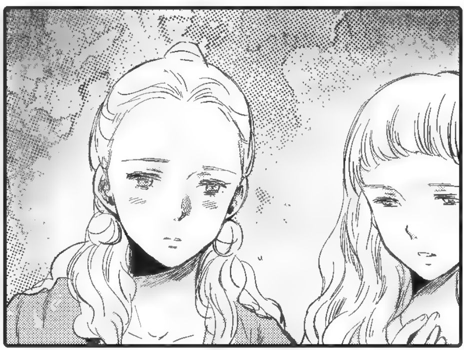
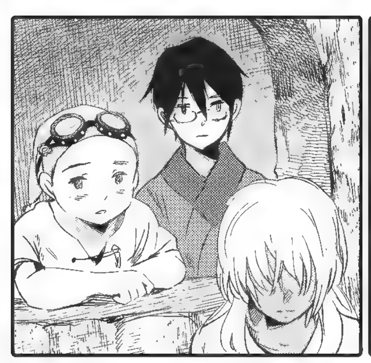
BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED TO JEOPARDIZE THAT.


...AND THAT CREATED A SERIOUS PROBLEM.
THIS INCREASED THE CHANCES THAT THEY MIGHT ONE DAY DISCOVER FÁLAINA...
...DEVELOPED A TECHNOLOGY THAT ALLOWS THEM TO NAVIGATE THE SEA OF SAND WITHOUT THE NOUSES.
A HOSTILE NATION THAT PRESENTS THE BIGGEST THREAT TO THE EMPIRE...
IT DOESN'T CONSUME PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS.
...FÁLAINA IS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER NOUSES.
THE NOUSES ARE THE FOUNDATION AND SYMBOL UPON WHICH THE EMPIRE IS BUILT.
EVERYTHING POSSIBLE MUST BE DONE TO KEEP ANY OF THE NOUSES...
...FROM FALLING INTO ENEMY HANDS.
...
BUT...

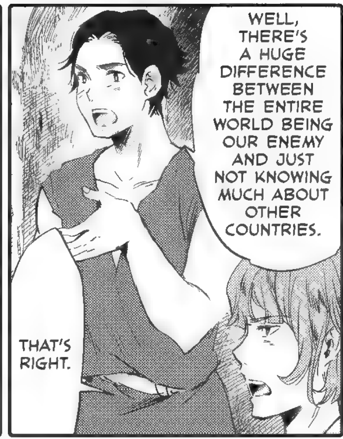

YOUR ANCESTORS REFUSED TO LET A NOUS CONSUME THEIR EMOTIONS...
...AND INSTEAD CHOSE TO KEEP THEIR FEELINGS FOR THEMSELVES.
SO THE DEFECTIVE FÁLAINA BECAME A FLOATING PRISON FOR DEVIANTS.
WE WERE TAUGHT ...
...THAT FÁLAINA CONTAINED SAVAGES WHO WERE RULED BY THEIR EMOTIONS.
TRAPPED ON A SMALL SHIP ON THE SEA OF SAND, THEY SURVIVED BY THEIR HATRED AND DISTRUST OF EACH OTHER—
A LIVING HELL.


THE ENEMY CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO ATTAIN FÁLAINA.
BUT FÁLAINA AND ITS PRISONERS...
...CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE EMPIRE.
SO THEY DECIDED...
...TO DESTROY FÁLAINA AND ANNIHILATE THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ORIGINAL CRIMINALS.
AND MY BROTHER...
...PUT-

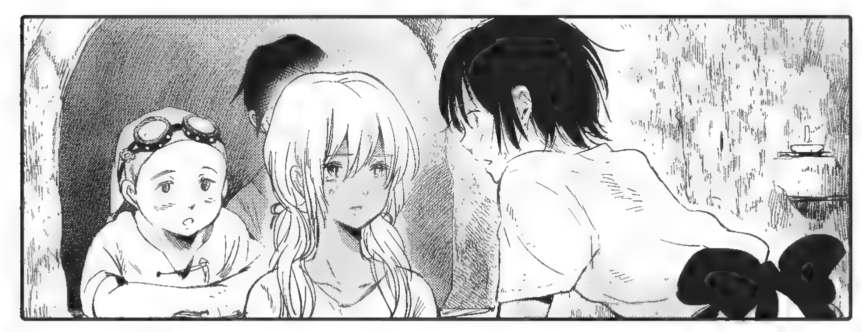


B-BUT...
BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE ...
...WHO AREN'T OUR ENEMIES, RIGHT?
YES... BUT...
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES.


WELL, THERE'S A HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ENTIRE WORLD BEING OUR ENEMY AND JUST NOT KNOWING MUCH ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES.
THAT'S RIGHT.


WHAT IF SOMEONE OUT THERE FINDS US...
...AND ACKNOWL-EDGES OUR RIGHT TO EXIST?




LYKOS ...
...CAN WE WAIT FOR THAT?


WE WOULD HAVE TO...
...HOLD OFF THE ATTACKS UNTIL THEY FIND US.

DO YOU THINK WE CAN FIGHT ON HOPE...

...UNTIL WE FIND FRIENDS IN THE WORLD?

IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT...

I...

...WILL DO ALL I CAN TO HELP YOU.

I THINK WHAT LYKOS TOLD US ISN'T THE WHOLE OF IT.

THE EMPIRE COULD HAVE ANOTHER REASON ...

...FOR DESTROYING FÁLAINA.

MAYBE WE'RE MORE THAN JUST THINGS TO ANNIHILATE?

STILL...


WE HAVE HOPE NOW.
THE SUN DOES NOT BETRAY OUR DAY.
THE STARS DO NOT BETRAY OUR YEAR.
THEY BRING US BOUNTY WITHOUT FAIL...
...IN A CYCLE NEVER ENDING.
NEITHER THE HEAVENS NOR THE STARS CURSE US.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THE COMMIT-TEE OF ELDERS ALLOWED THIS.
GO, SUOU!


Suou revealed to the people of the Mud Whale...
...what Lykos had told us about our situation.
He chose his words carefully and kept the description brief...
...to avoid shocking them.
WE PLAN TO CONTINUE FIGHTING UNTIL SOME-ONE OUT THERE...
...SEES US FOR WHO WE ARE...
...AND EXTENDS A HELPING HAND.
AND FOR THAT...
WAH WAH
...WE NEED TO RELY...
...ON THE MARKED AND THEIR THYMIA.


I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SAVE YOU FROM YOUR SHORT-LIVED FATE.


I HAVEN'T MADE ANY PROGRESS IN HELPING YOU...


...AND YET HERE I AM, ASKING YOU TO DO THIS.


SUOU ...

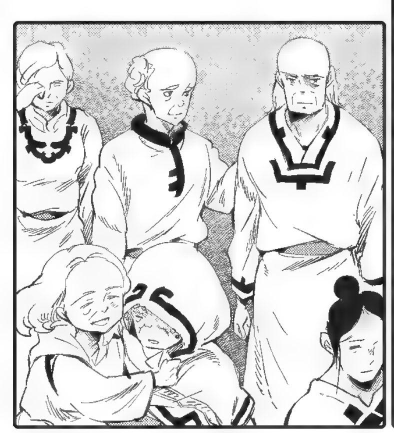

OH!
OH!

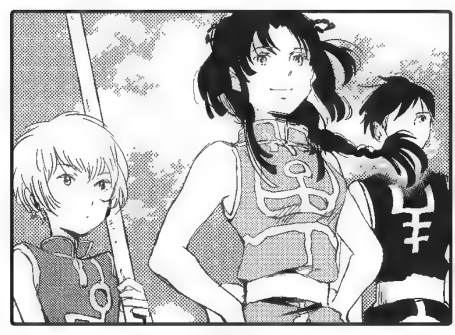
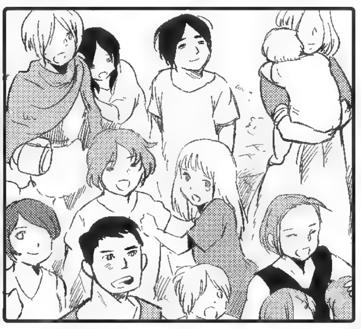

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO HASN'T ACCEPTED THE WAY THINGS ARE.


THE MARKED HAVE LONG ACCEPTED THE CURSE OF OUR SHORT LIVES.
WE'LL DO THE SAME FOR THIS TOO.
ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR YOU...
...TO DECLARE THAT WE FIGHT!
!
OUNI?!
YOU'LL...


...HELP US TOO?
GLANCE
YOU WANT TO PROTECT EVERYONE, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW, AND THAT UPSETS YOU, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT.

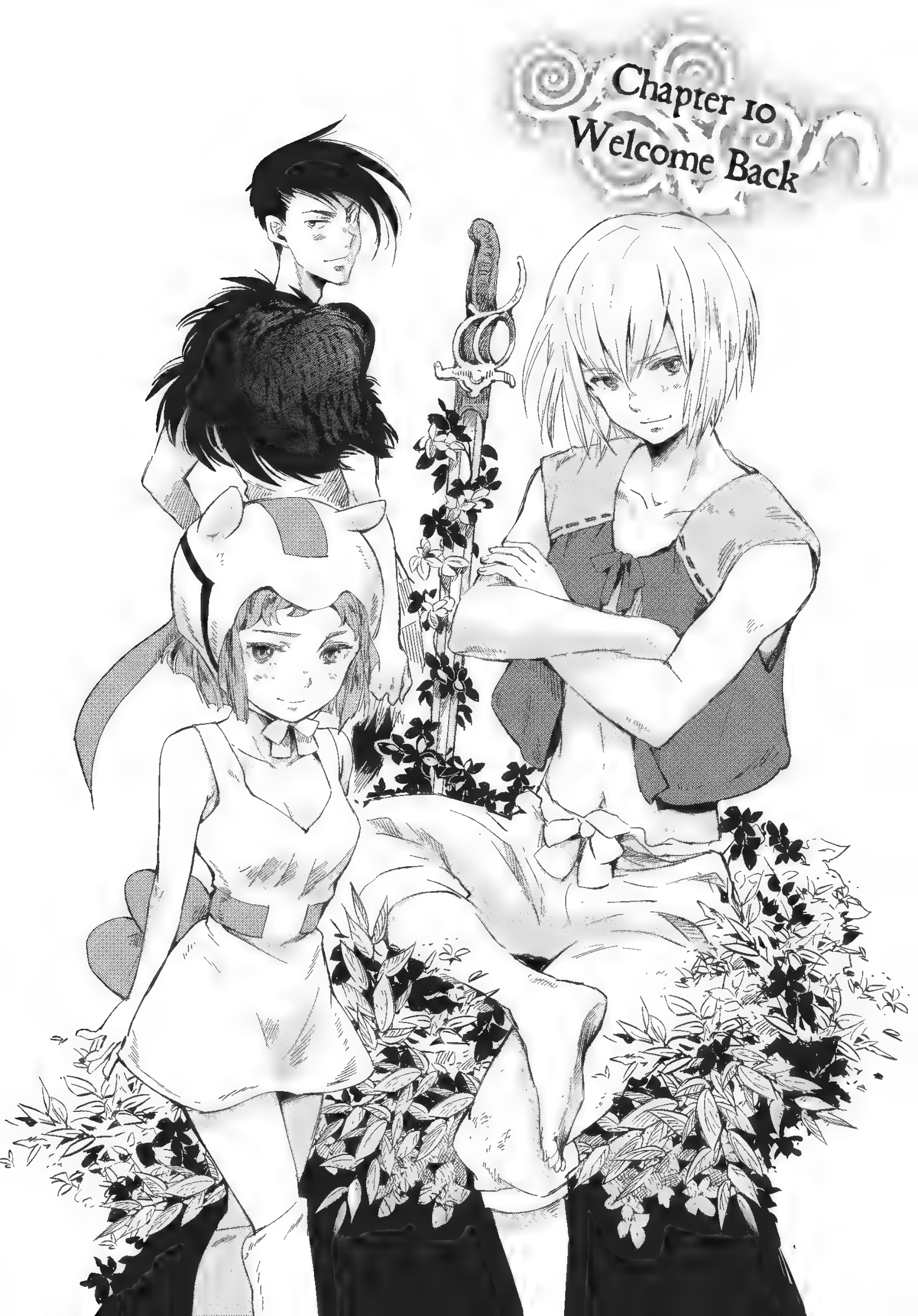

YEAH!

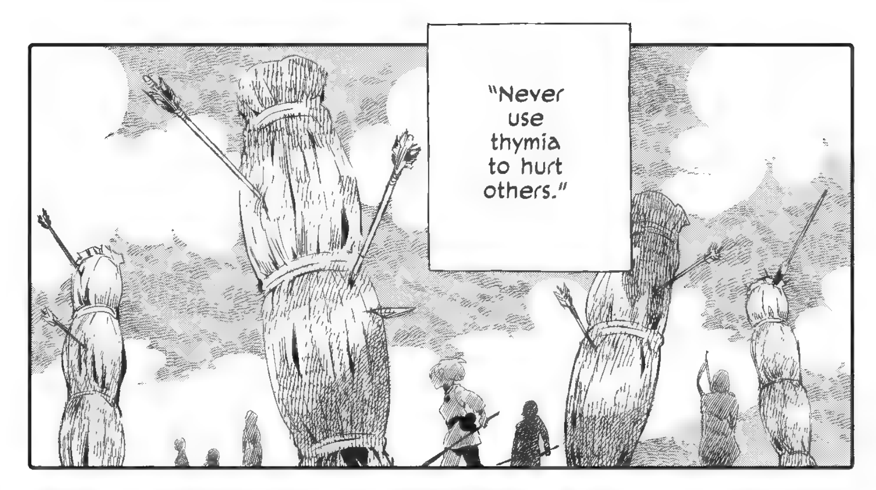


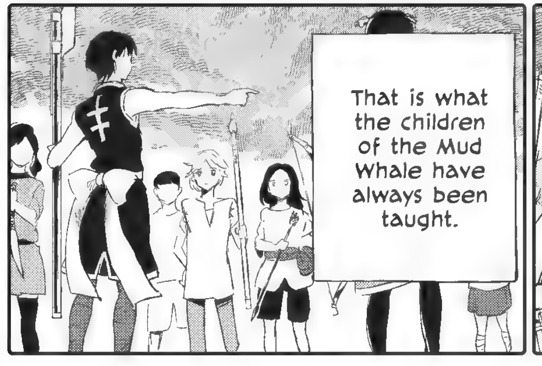
OH DEAR.



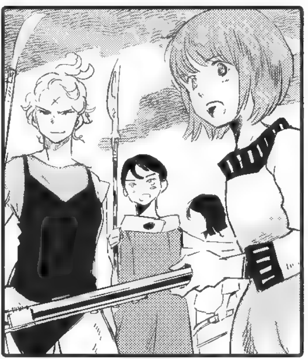



Choosing Paradise - The End -

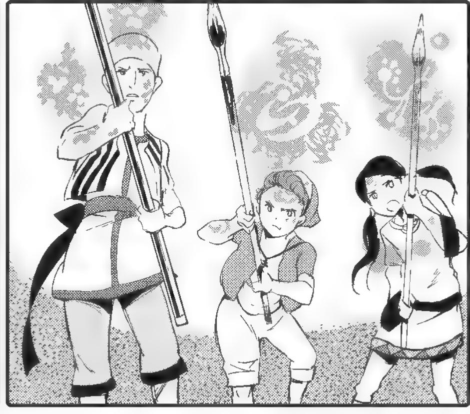

Chapter 10
Welcome Back


"Never use thymia to hurt others."


That is what the children of the Mud Whale have always been taught.




But now we had decided to fight.

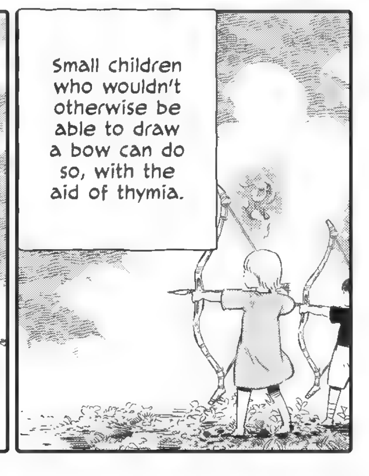


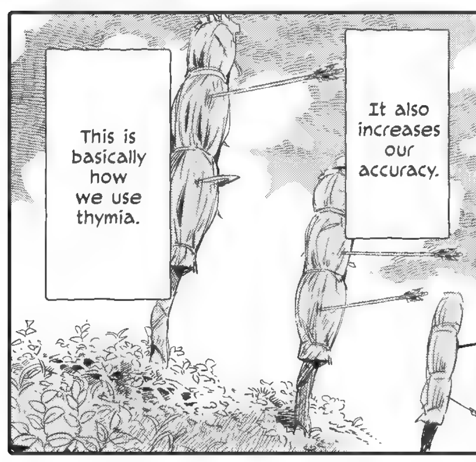


But we tried our hardest, and we were dead serious.




Thymia can't be used directly against another person...
...but when we use our power for hunting...
...we focus our energies on our bow and arrows or knives.


Small children who wouldn't otherwise be able to draw a bow can do so, with the aid of thymia.


It also increases our accuracy.
This is basically how we use thymia.




TMP


HEY, YOU.

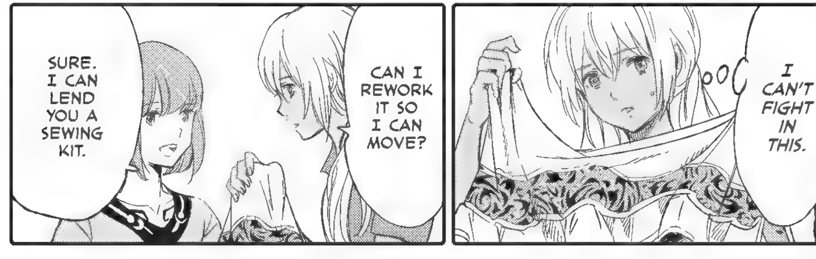

DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH US?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.
GLOOMY.
GLOOMY AND BALD.
GLOOMY RECORD-KEEPING MANIAC DESTROYER.
!!
ARE YOU GUYS OKAY?
SHVR
SHVR


DO YOU WANT SOMETHING?
BRING IT HERE.


THUD

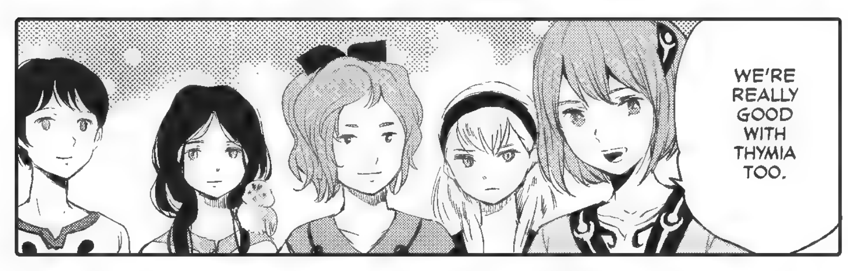

SHINONO ASKED US TO PUT SOME STUFF TOGETHER...
...BECAUSE SHE FEELS BAD THAT YOUR CLOTHES ARE ALL TORN UP.


RUSH
I THINK THIS COLOR WOULD GO WELL WITH YOUR SKIN TONE.
THIS ONE'S CUTE TOO.


I CAN'T FIGHT IN THIS.
CAN I REWORK IT SO I CAN MOVE?
SURE. I CAN LEND YOU A SEWING KIT.

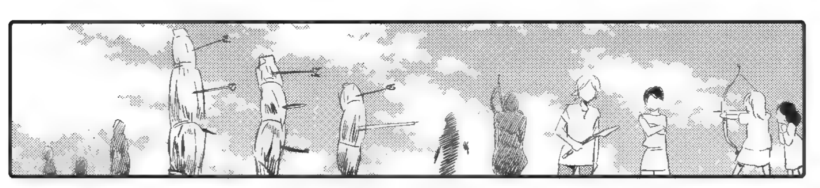

YOU SHOULD COME HANG OUT WITH US INSTEAD OF THOSE NERDY GUYS.
RIGHT?

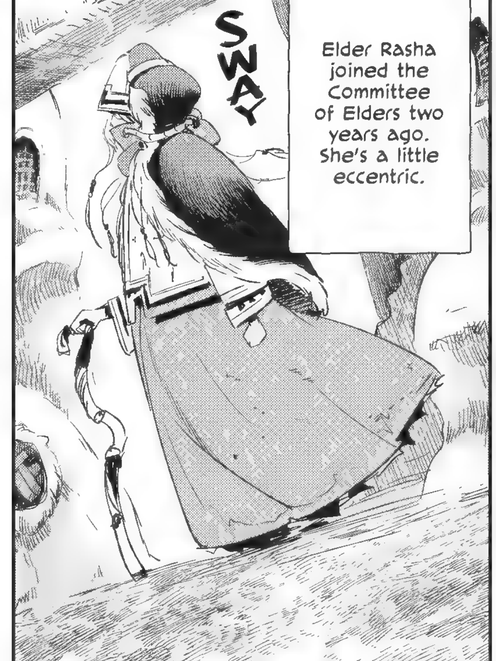

MY NAME IS URUMI.
NICE TO MEET YOU.

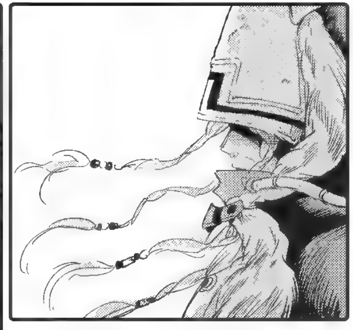

WE'RE REALLY GOOD WITH THYMIA TOO.


WE WANT TO FIGHT WITH YOU.
OUR...
HEY...
...TELL US ABOUT THE ENEMY.

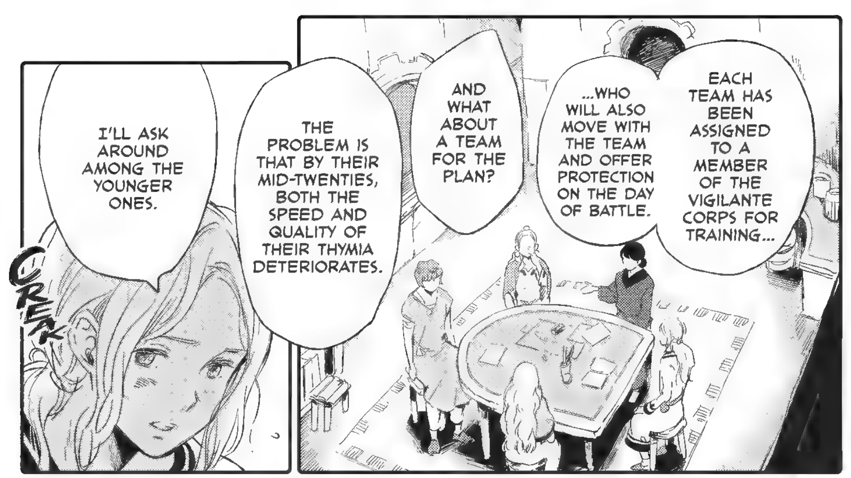
... FRIEND ...
...WAS KILLED.







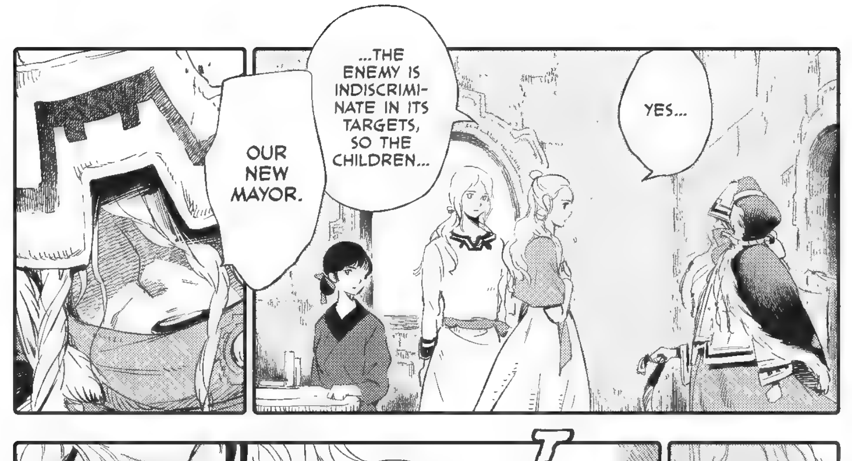


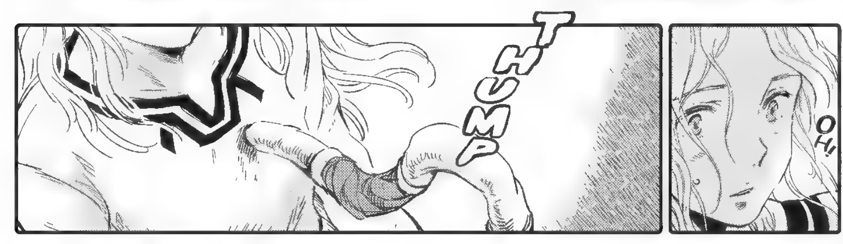

EACH TEAM HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO A MEMBER OF THE VIGILANTE CORPS FOR TRAINING...
...WHO WILL ALSO MOVE WITH THE TEAM AND OFFER PROTECTION ON THE DAY OF BATTLE.
AND WHAT ABOUT A TEAM FOR THE PLAN?
THE PROBLEM IS THAT BY THEIR MID-TWENTIES, BOTH THE SPEED AND QUALITY OF THEIR THYMIA DETERIORATES.
I'LL ASK AROUND AMONG THE YOUNGER ONES.
CREAK


TONK
OH!


ELDER RASHA...
...ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?
NEVER MIND ABOUT THAT.


I SEE THE CHILDREN ARE TRAINING.


YES...
...THE ENEMY IS INDISCRIMINATE IN ITS TARGETS, SO THE CHILDREN...
OUR NEW MAYOR.


OH!
THUMP
I HEAR...
...YOUR LITTLE SISTER WAS KILLED BY THEM.
I'M SURE YOU HATE THE OUTSIDERS...
...BUT DON'T FORGET...

THESE CHILDREN COULD KILL SOMEONE TOMORROW.

YOU MADE THAT DECISION.



HOW ABOUT YOU?

I HEAR YOU WERE WITH TAISHA...

...BUT YOU COULDN'T PROTECT HER.

!


WERE YOU PLANNING TO GO ON A REVENGE SPREE?
YOU CAN'T EVEN FIGHT.
THE MARKED CHILDREN ARE THE ONES BEING SACRIFICED.
KUCHIBA.


HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?!

THE ONLY PLAN THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS COULD COME UP WITH WAS ***MASS SUICIDE***!
IF YOU'RE UN-HAPPY ...
NEVER MIND.
DO WHAT YOU WANT.
IT WILL ALL BE OVER TOMORROW, ANYWAY.


THE CURSED CHILDREN OF THE WHALE...
...WILL FINALLY BE SAVED.
ELDER RASHA ...
IF WE DO NOTHING, WE'RE JUST AWAITING DEATH.
CURSES AND HATRED HAVE NO PLACE HERE.
WE CAN'T STOP THINKING.
WE CAN'T JUST STAND STILL.

OUNI, WERE YOU SELECTED FOR THE MAYOR'S PLAN?

IT'S DANGER-OUS, RIGHT?

ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO HELP HIM?

I'M GOING TO GET SOME FOOD.

COME WITH ME, JIKI.

NIBI...

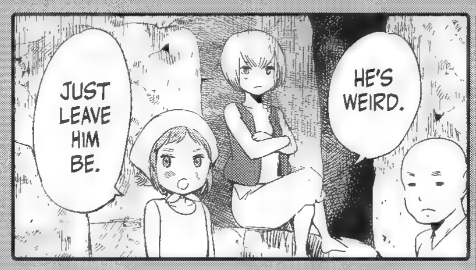
...WHAT WILL YOU DO?

WILL YOU FIGHT?

I...

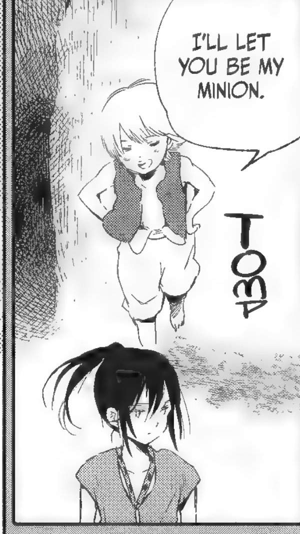

I HAVEN'T ...
...GIVEN UP YET.
YOU'VE BEEN STRANGE SINCE THE DAY WE MET.
NO ONE KNEW WHO YOUR PARENTS WERE.
YOU WEREN'T PART OF ANY GROUP.
ONE DAY YOU JUST STARTED SHOWING UP IN A CORNER OF THE RESIDENTIAL AREA.

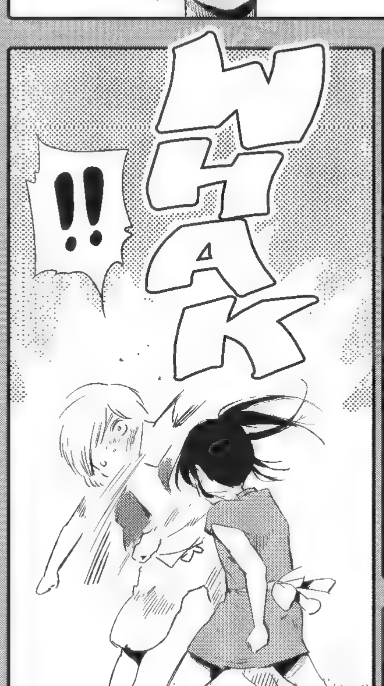

HE'S ALONE TOO.


HE'S WEIRD.
JUST LEAVE HIM BE.


...
GRIN


HEY ...
... YOU.


I'LL LET YOU BE MY MINION.
TOMP


WHAK
!!


I'M SAYING I'LL PLAY WITH YOU.
TUG
HEY!


TWITCH

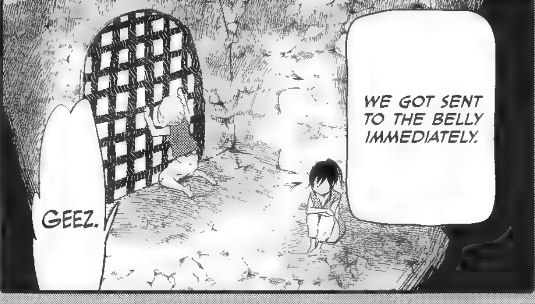

WHY, YOU ...?!


OWW...


I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE ...
LET ME OUT...!


FIGHTING WITH THYMIA IS A SERIOUS INFRACTION ON THE MUD WHALE.
WAAAH!
BLUB



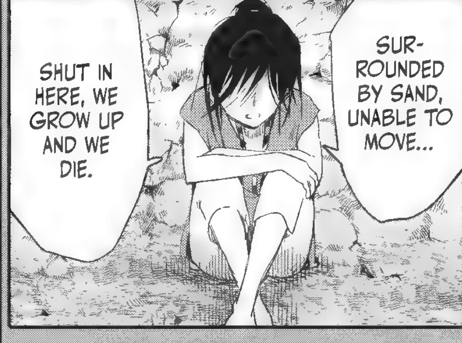

WE GOT SENT TO THE BELLY IMMEDIATELY.
GEEZ.


WHY DO YOU WANT TO GET OUT SO BADLY?
IT'S ALL THE SAME, IN HERE OR OUT THERE.


...?


IT'S *NOT* THE SAME.
YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU DON'T MIND BEING SO CRAMPED?

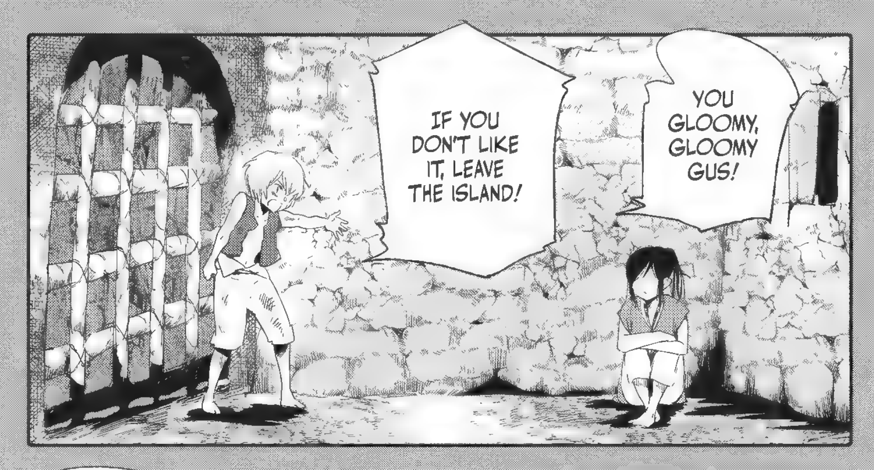

THIS *ISLAND* IS CRAMPED.


SUR-ROUNDED BY SAND, UNABLE TO MOVE...
SHUT IN HERE, WE GROW UP AND WE DIE.


IT'S ALL THE SAME.


...


THEN LEAVE.


YOU GLOOMY, GLOOMY GUS!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, LEAVE THE ISLAND!

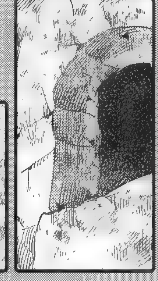

IF YOU CAN'T DO IT...
...I'LL TAKE YOU.

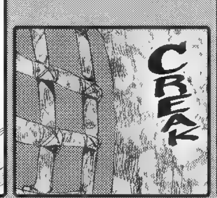

...
OKAY THEN...
IT'S DECIDED.
YOU'LL BE MY MINION AFTER ALL.
THOMP
GLARE

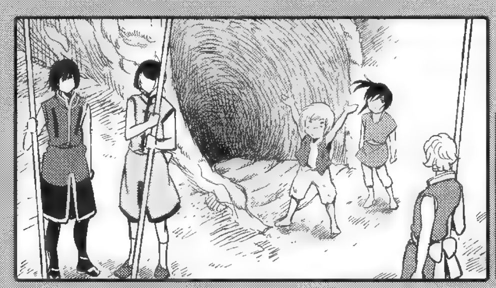

NO, BE MY HENCH-MAN...
WAIT, THAT'S THE SAME THING.
I GOT IT.

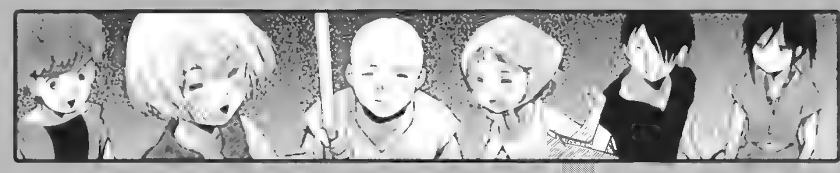

BE MY *COMRADE.*


THEN I'LL GET YOU OUT.




CREAK







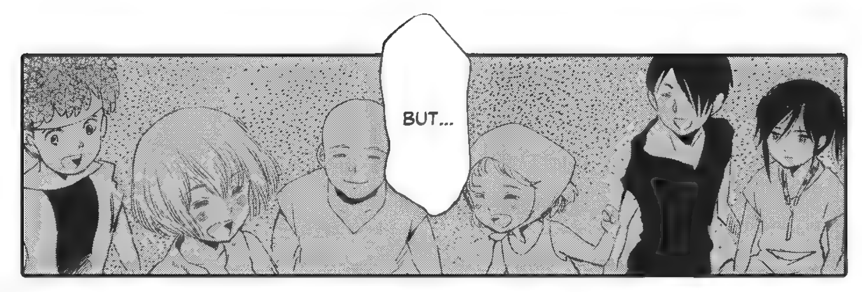


I HAVEN'T GIVEN UP ON GETTING TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

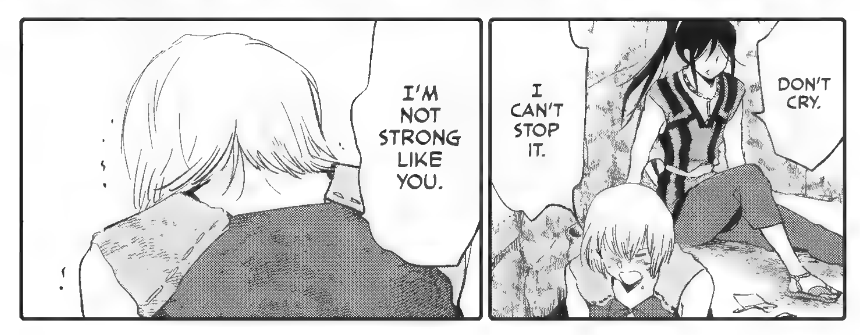
I'LL DESTROY ANYONE WHO GETS IN OUR WAY, AND I'LL TAKE YOU THERE.







I'LL NEVER SEE THEM AGAIN.



YOU'RE AMAZING...

I'VE *NEVER* SEEN YOU CRY, OUNI.

...






DON'T LEAVE ME BEHIND.
I WON'T.
LOOK AT ME WHEN YOU SAY THAT...
...OUNI.


CHAKU-RO.
WHAM
WHAM
LYKOS.
THAT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.
HERE ...
YOUR CLOTHES ARE RIPPED...
...SO I REMADE SOME OF WHAT THEY GAVE ME FOR YOU.









TOK

TOK

TOK

HEARTS JUST GET IN THE WAY.

TOK

AS I THOUGHT...


...?
There has been a gradual change in Lykos since we first met.


...

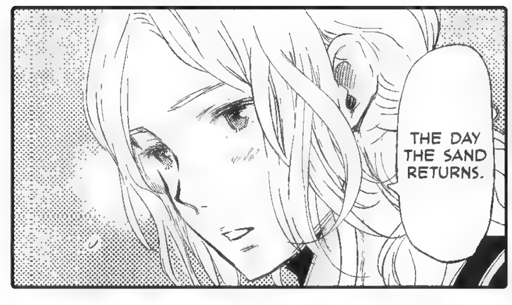

GATHERING SAND.
TOMORROW IS THE DAY THE SAND RETURNS.




HEY, KIDS...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

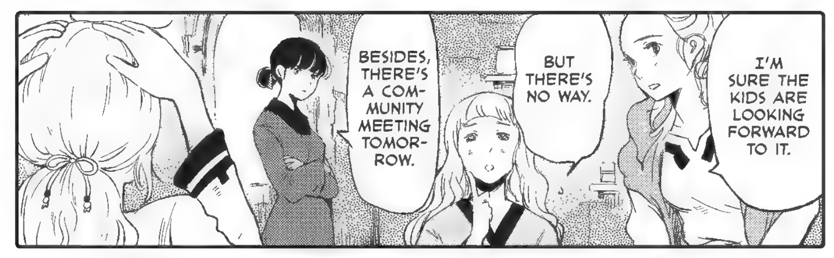

KSSH KSSH


...

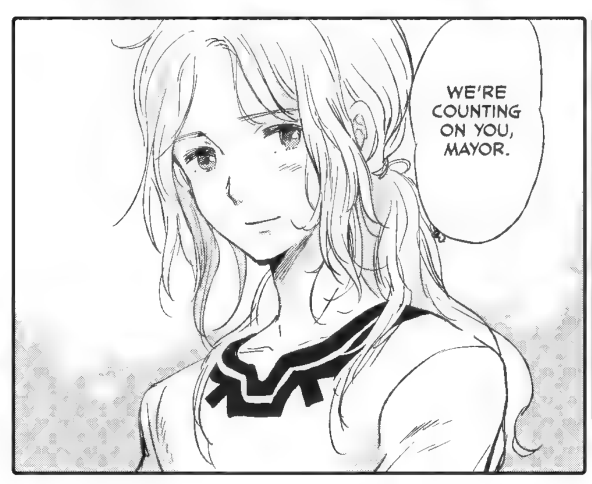

THE DAY THE SAND RETURNS.


WE CAN'T DO IT TOMORROW, CAN WE?
HUH?

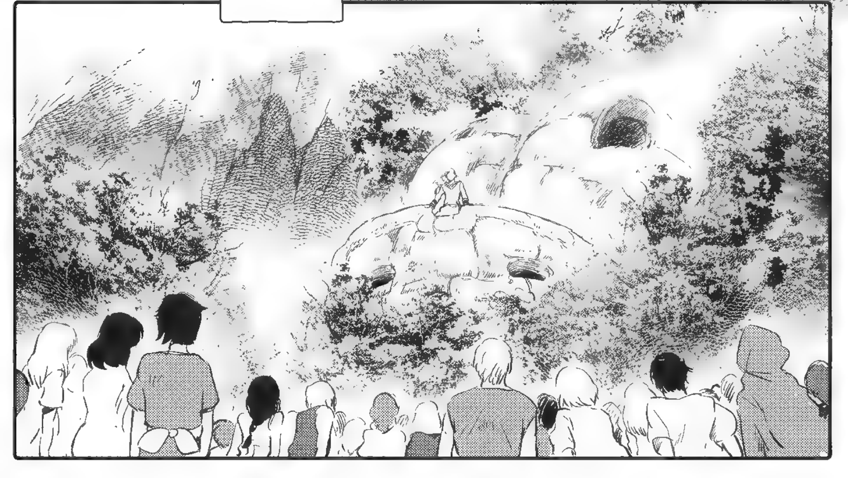

WHY WOULD WE THROW SAND AND FROLIC ON THE DAY BEFORE ...
...AN ATTACK ?
GRND GRND
OW, OW.

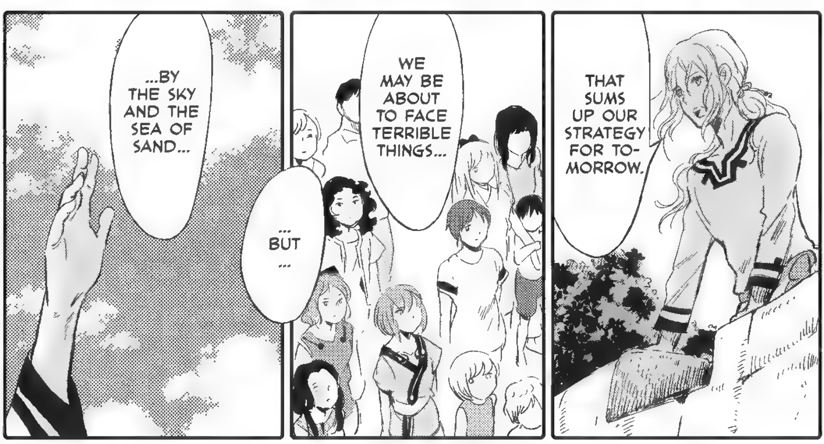

I'M SURE THE KIDS ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY.
BESIDES, THERE'S A COM-MUNITY MEETING TOMOR-ROW.


WE NEED TO BRING EVERYONE'S HEARTS TOGETHER ONE LAST TIME.

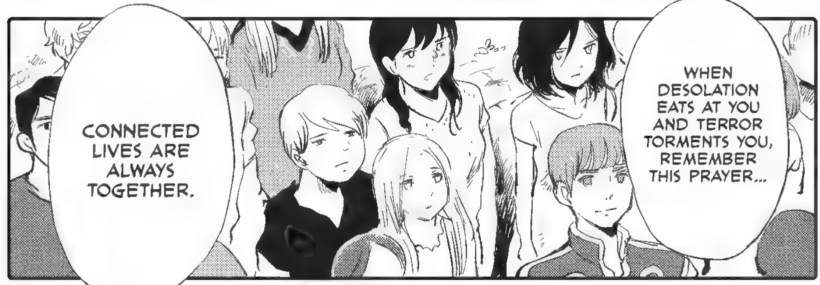

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, MAYOR.


The day before Skyros attacked...
...I pulled the best prank ever thought up...
...in the whole time I lived on the Mud Whale.
SNEAK




THAT SUMS UP OUR STRATEGY FOR TO-MORROW.
WE MAY BE ABOUT TO FACE TERRIBLE THINGS...
...BUT...
...BY THE SKY AND THE SEA OF SAND...





MAYOR SUOU...!

HE DID WELL THIS TIME.

SIGH...

HE DID.

RATTARATTA


KSSSSH
CLUNK
SSSH
...
UP THERE!


A YEAR SPENT PERFECTING THIS, JUST FOR TODAY!
A MASTER-PIECE OF HARD WORK BY THE SHOP...
AN AUTOMATIC SAND THROWING MACHINE!
CLENCH
WE CALL IT...
AUTO-MATIC...
...SAND THROW-ING...
...MACHINE!
THAT'S NOT A NAME.
COUGH
DO...
...YOU THINK I NEVER GET ANGRY?!
SHAKE SHAKE
CHA-KURO...!!
NEZU!!
RO!!


FLAIL
FLAIL
FWA
GET BACK HERE ...!
HE'S ANGRIER THAN WE THOUGHT HE'D BE.
IT'S FINE.
SUOU IS SUPER UNCOORDINATED, SO WE CAN GET AWAY.
PUSH!
FWING
MAYOR SUOU THREW THE SAND!
That's the signal to start the festivities.
The Day the Sand Returns always begins with the mayor throwing the first fistful of sand.
HEY...
YAAY!
WE'RE DOING THE DAY THE SAND RETURNS AFTER ALL!
THUD

The Day the Sand Returns is a festival where we throw sand at each other.

It happens every year, and if nothing else had been going on, today would've been the celebration.

Anything goes on the Day the Sand Returns, so you can throw sand at anyone.

AAGH!

Everyone participates, and sand fights go on all day.




WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
I SHOULD SEND YOU TO THE BELLY.


WE'RE SORRY.


THAT'S OKAY.
THIS COULD BE...
...THE LAST DAY THE SAND RETURNS I CELE-BRATE.

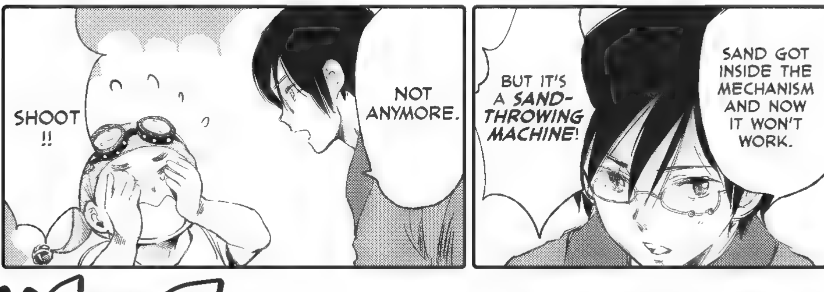

HERE GOES!
KWOOSH


GYAAK!


EEEEE!
SO, THOUGHT YOU'D MAKE FUN OF ME THE OTHER DAY, *HUH?*
KOOSH
USING A MACHINE IS CHEATING!
USE YOUR THYMIA!


SAYS WHO? TAKE THAT!





COME AT ME!

ARE YOU OKAY?

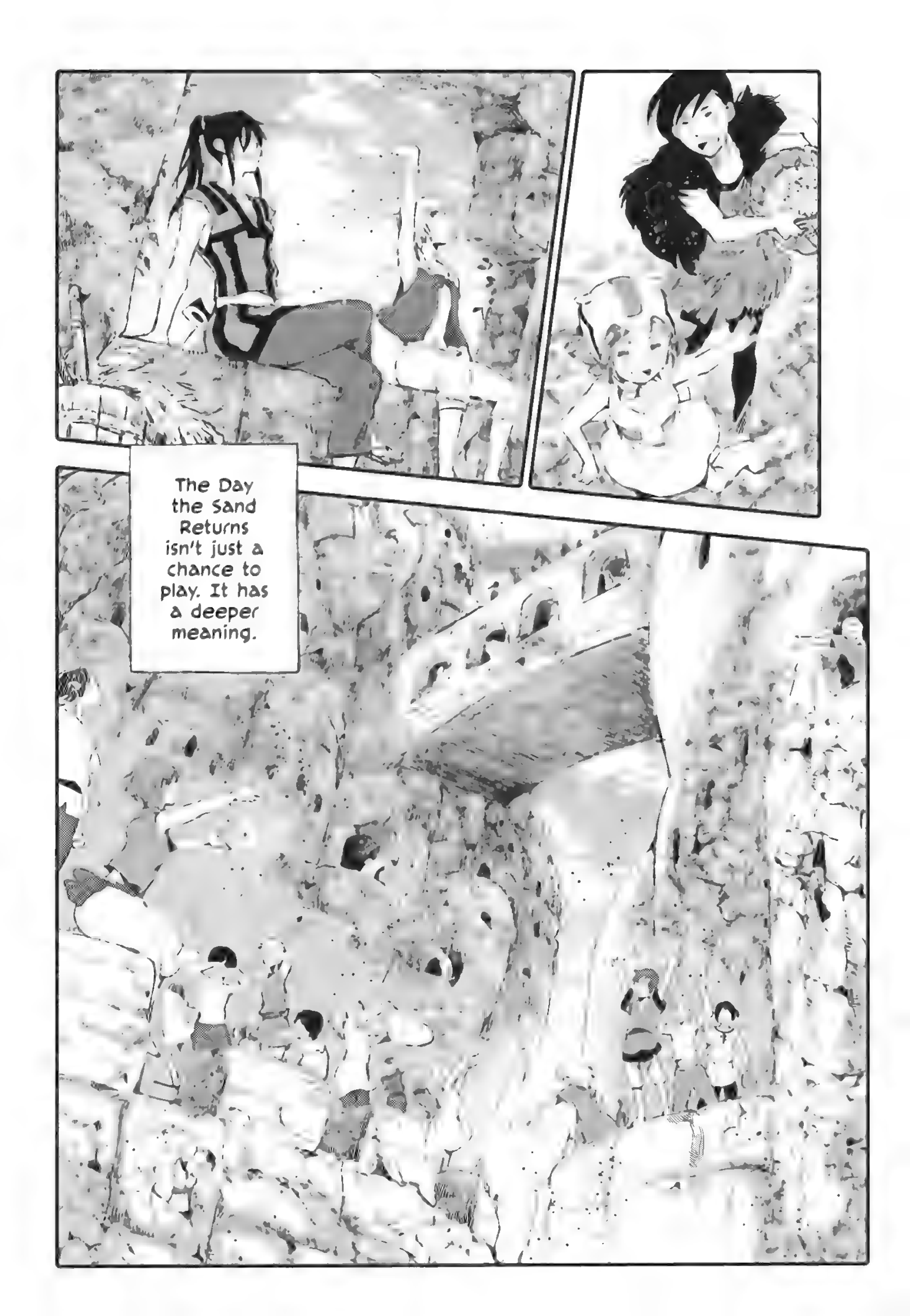
NO ONE CAN GET NEAR ME WITH MY BARRAGE OF SAND!

KOOSH

RIP

KSSH

?!


The Day the Sand Returns isn't just a chance to play. It has a deeper meaning.

The souls of the departed, who become one with the sand after they are sent off...

...return to us...

...through the thrown sand.










And I'll remember...
...forever.
Welcome back.
Welcome back.


Please ...
... watch over us tomorrow.


DEAR...


I'M GOING IN TOMORROW.
I GOT MY ORDERS FROM THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS.


PREPARE YOURSELF, SIENNA.
WE DON'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE AN UGLY CORPSE.
GRIN


...

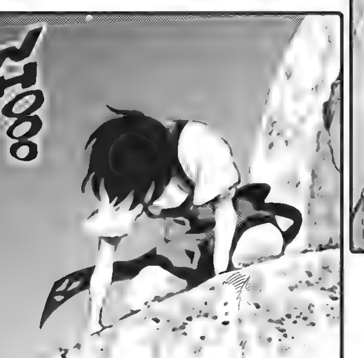

DO YOU FEEL NOTHING, EVEN THOUGH TOMORROW MIGHT BE THE END?
YOUR ONLY WORRY IS WHETHER YOUR WIFE'S SUICIDE WILL BE UGLY?

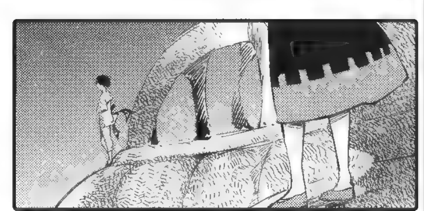

...?


EMOTIONS CAN'T BE SEEN OR TOUCHED.
WHY FUSS OVER SOMETHING NO ONE CAN UNDER-STAND?

HIC


TMP
TMP


WHOOO



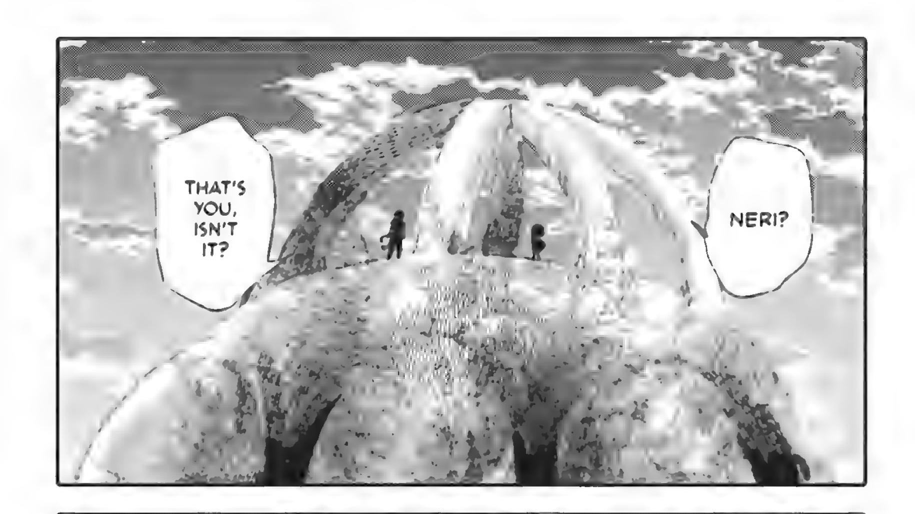

WHOOOO


OH!


NERI ...?


Welcome Back -The End-


Chapter II
Beyond the Debris
of War



THANK GOODNESS! I THOUGHT YOU'D GONE AWAY...

...

HUH?

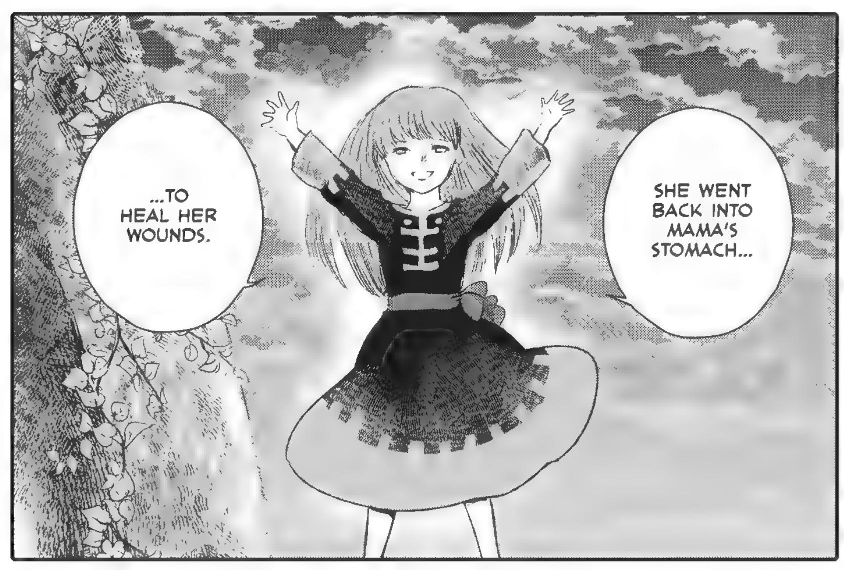
THAT'S NOT NERI!



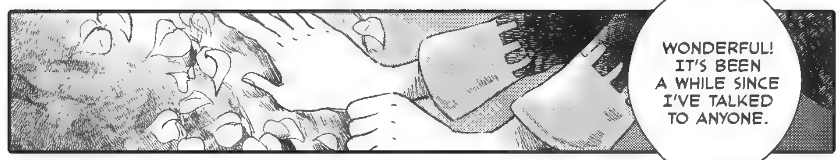

WHERE'S NERI?


WHO ARE YOU?




SHE WENT BACK INTO MAMA'S STOMACH...
...TO HEAL HER WOUNDS.


MAMA.
WHO'S MAMA ...?
YOU CAN HEAR...
...MY VOICE.


WONDERFUL! IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE TALKED TO ANYONE.


I'M...
...NERI'S TWIN.
CALL ME AÍMA.

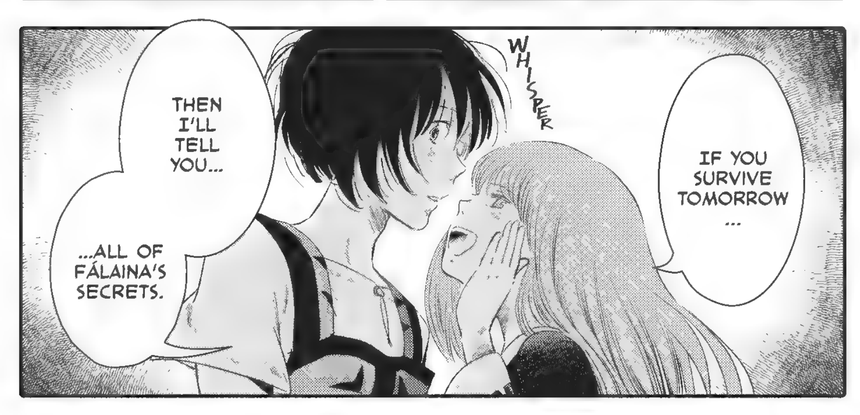

AÍMA...
THAT'S RIGHT, MR. ARCHIVIST.
HEY...
I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME SOME-THING...
DASH


WHOA!
HUG
PROMISE WHAT?


PROTECT THIS ISLAND, NO MATTER WHAT.
YOU SAID DOWN BELOW THAT YOU WOULD PROTECT EVERY-ONE.


LET'S ALL LIVE TOGETHER, FOREVER AND EVER.


PROMISE ME.


IF YOU SURVIVE TOMORROW ...
WHISPER
THEN I'LL TELL YOU...
...ALL OF FÁLAINA'S SECRETS.


YOU MEAN THE HISTORY OF THE MUD WHALE?
SHUU
YOU KNOW IT?


HEE HEE




KYA HAHAHAHAHA

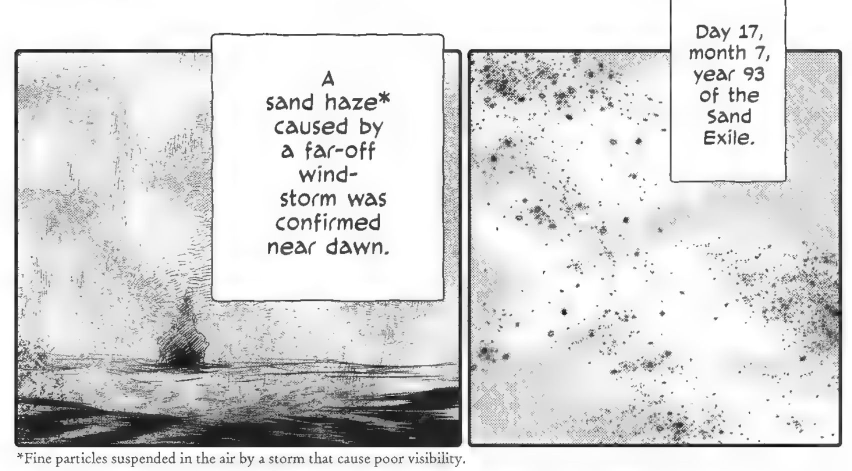

AÍMA!
KYAHAHAHAHA


WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?
WHO ARE YOU AND NERI?


GH!


WHOO

IT'S HAZY...

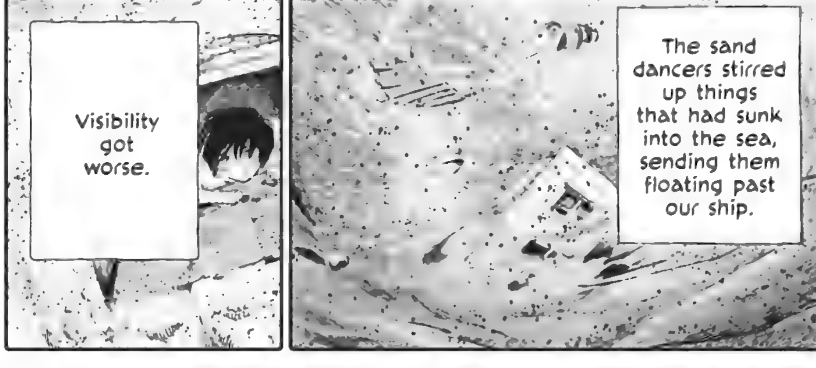


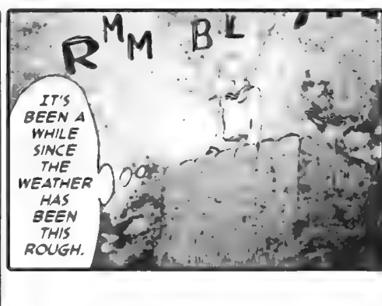
*Fine particles suspended in the air by a storm that cause poor visibility.



After sunrise, a storm descended.

Violent updrafts caused spouts called sand dancers to form.











Our plan to defend against the battleship Skyros's campaign to eradicate the inhabitants of the Mud Whale...

...is as follows—

Teams will form around each tower's food storehouse.

There are four teams.

Team 1

Team 2

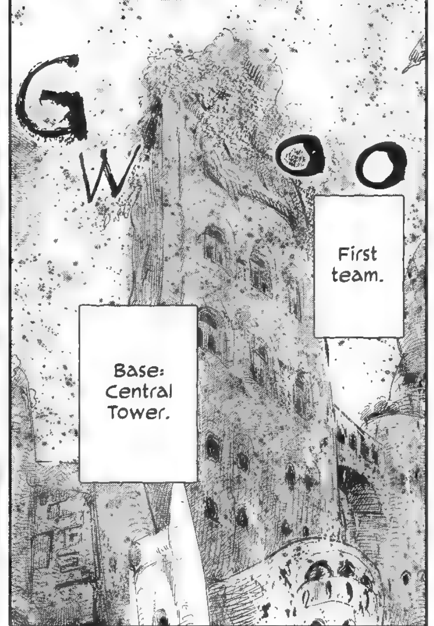
Team 3

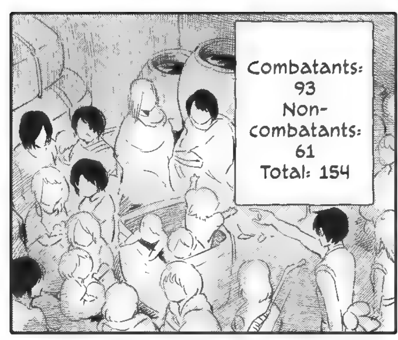
Team 4

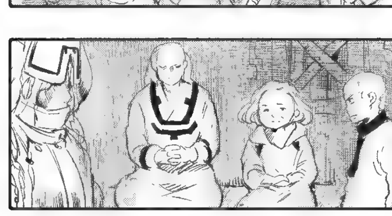
They will hole up, using these bases as central points.

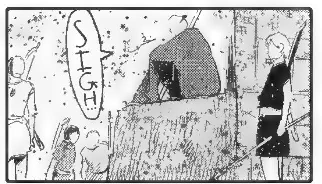
The storehouse will accommodate the noncombatants, like children under eight years old, the Marked who are close to the end, and the sick and injured.

The Unmarked will take care of them.

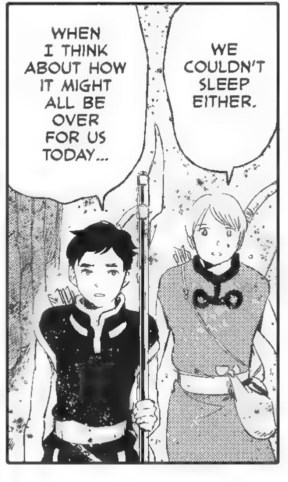

GWOOO
First team.
Base: Central Tower.

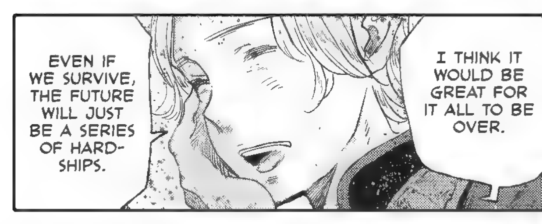

Combatants: 93 Non-combatants: 61 Total: 154




SIGH


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, COMMANDER?
HMM?


WE COULDN'T SLEEP EITHER.
WHEN I THINK ABOUT HOW IT MIGHT ALL BE OVER FOR US TODAY...


I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT FOR IT ALL TO BE OVER.
EVEN IF WE SURVIVE, THE FUTURE WILL JUST BE A SERIES OF HARDSHIPS.


THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH FIGHTING SO WE CAN SUFFER LATER...
...DON'T YOU THINK?



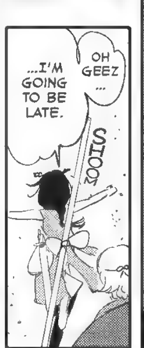

COMMANDER!
GINSHU.


SO I KNOW YOU'RE POWERFUL...
...AND ALL THAT...
...BUT YOU'RE A COWARD TOO.

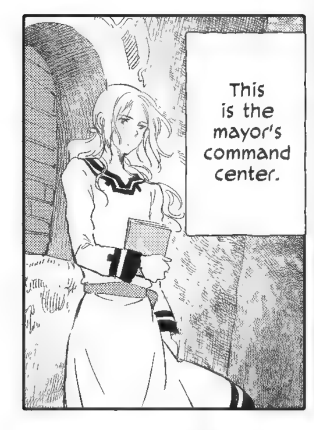

I AM?
YEAH, BUT NOT TO WORRY!
FRAILTIES LIKE THAT...
WOMP WOMP
...CAN BE CURED IF YOU WORK AT IT!

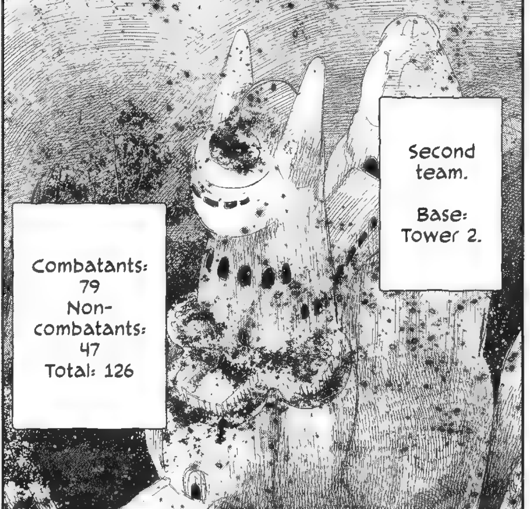

SO JUST TRY HARDER.


SMILE

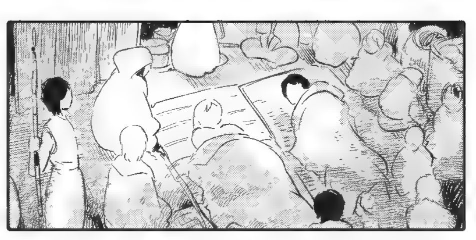

OH GEEZ...
...I'M GOING TO BE LATE.
SHOOM


...

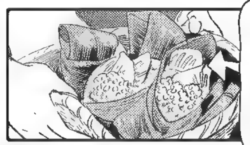

This is the mayor's command center.


Second team.
Base: Tower 2.
Combatants: 79
Non-combatants: 47
Total: 126


WILL YOU HAND THESE OUT?
RO...




OKAY ...
... MOM.


Boiled oomasa-gochiku bamboo shoots with dried sand helmet roe.

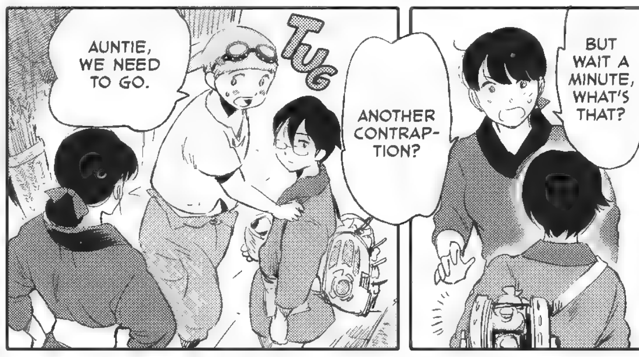

RO.


WE'LL PROTECT YOU ALL...
...SO DON'T WORRY.


MOM ...
YES?


I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SAID THAT...
BLUB


I CAN NEVER TELL WHAT YOU'RE THINKING...
...SINCE YOU NEVER TALK...
...BUT YOU'VE REALLY GROWN UP!

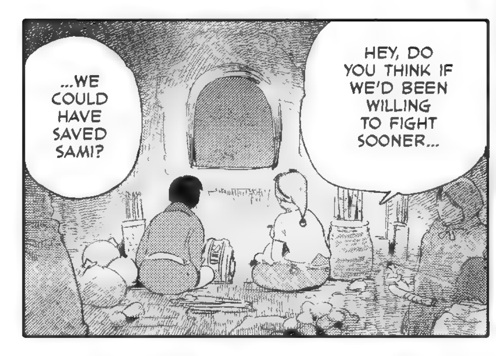

BUT WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT'S THAT?
ANOTHER CONTRAP-TION?
TUG
AUNTIE, WE NEED TO GO.


HON-ESTLY...

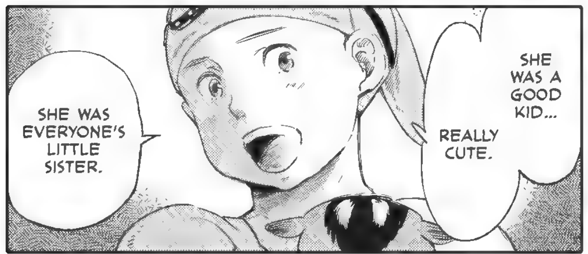

COME HERE, HAMMY.
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR CHAKURO, HE'S NOT HERE.
YOU NAMED HIM?


NAMED? NO.
CHAKURO WANTS TO FATTEN HIM UP TO EAT, RIGHT?
JOLT
SO I THOUGHT IF I'M GOING TO EAT HIM, I WANT HIM TO TASTE LIKE HAM.
HE'S STILL REALLY SKINNY, SO IT WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE WE CAN EAT HIM.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND YOUR STAN-DARDS.
PLUMP


CAN WE AIM FROM HERE?
YEAH.


HEY, DO YOU THINK IF WE'D BEEN WILLING TO FIGHT SOONER...
...WE COULD HAVE SAVED SAMI?


...

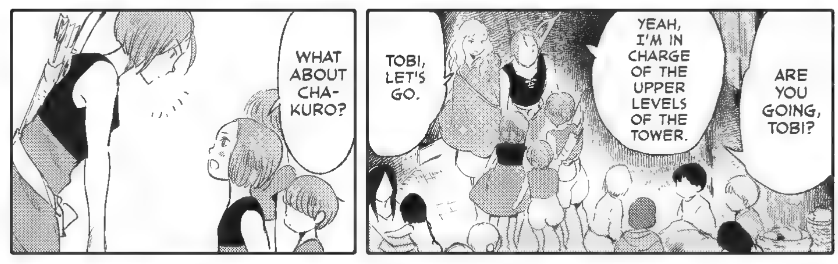

SHE WAS A GOOD KID...
REALLY CUTE.
SHE WAS EVERYONE'S LITTLE SISTER.


YEAH.


LET'S DO THIS.


POMF





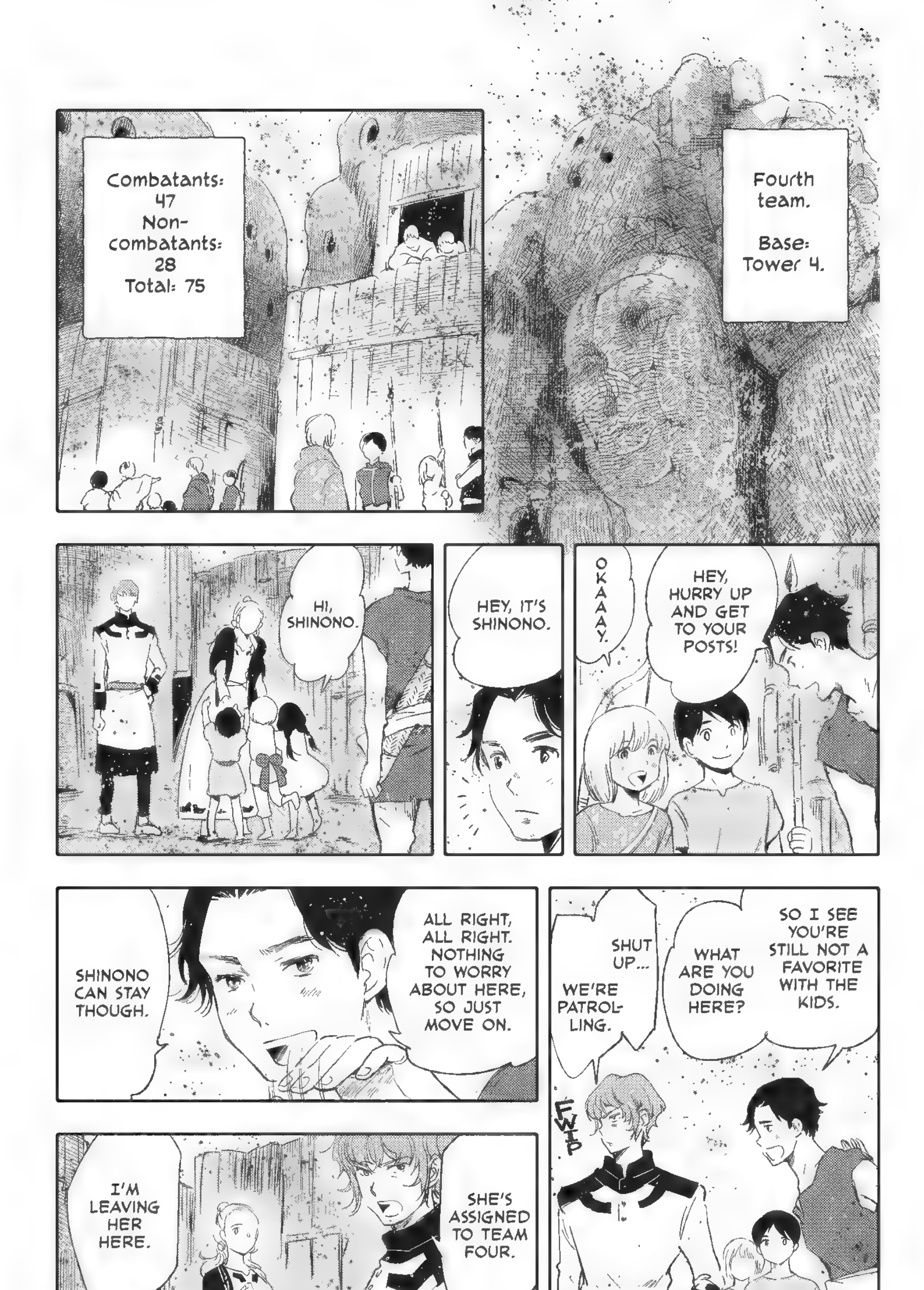
CHAKURO SHOULD STAY IN THE WAREHOUSE.

HE'S A DESTROYER.

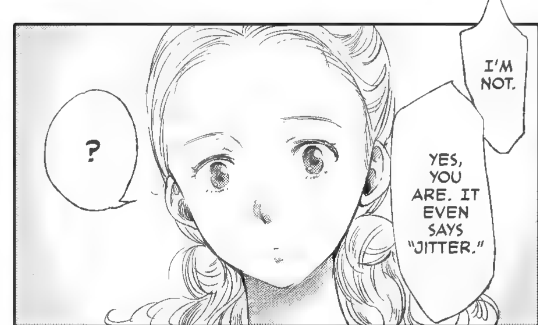
IT'S DANGEROUS IF YOU'RE BAD AT THYMIA.

WHY ISN'T CHAKURO ON THIS TEAM?

...


Fourth team.
Base: Tower 4.
Combatants: 47
Non-combatants: 28
Total: 75
HEY, HURRY UP AND GET TO YOUR POSTS!
OKAAAY.
HEY, IT'S SHINONO.
HI, SHINONO.
SO I SEE YOU'RE STILL NOT A FAVORITE WITH THE KIDS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
SHUT UP... WE'RE PATROL-LING.
FWIP
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE, SO JUST MOVE ON.
SHINONO CAN STAY THOUGH.
SHE'S ASSIGNED TO TEAM FOUR.
I'M LEAVING HER HERE.
HUH?


SERI-OUSLY...
JITTER
JITTER
DON'T JITTER.


I'M NOT.
YES, YOU ARE. IT EVEN SAYS "JITTER."
?


CAN YOU LOOK AFTER MY LITTLE ONE AND SHINONO'S SON?


SURE, I DON'T MIND.


YOU LOOK A LITTLE PALE.


MASOH, HOW OLD ARE YOU?
JOLT


UMM...
...28.
MUMBLE


WHAT?!
IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS ALREADY?


OH, THAT.


TWENTY YEARS AGO.
MASOH, 8 YEARS OLD.
POIK
THUMP
THUMP


KUCHIBA, 19 YEARS OLD.
MUMBLE MUMBLE


SPLO OSH
YESSS!


KYAA!
GRND
GRND


THIS GRUDGE HAS PERSISTED FOR 20 YEARS.
GRR...
THAT'S A LONG TIME.
HOW VERY PEACEFUL.


I JUST WANT TO SAY IT'S VERY IMMATURE OF YOU.
ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU RELENTED, OLD MAN?


NEVER MIND...
YOU'RE GETTING UP THERE— DON'T PUSH TOO HARD.
LATER.


...
THERE'S SOMETHING A LITTLE OFF ABOUT HIM TODAY.

Bone Plaza.
The base for the 14-member assault team.
SERIOUSLY SORRY!
I'M LATE!
HEY, GINSHU!
THAT'S NOT GOOD.
TEAMWORK IS IMPORTANT, OKAY?
MUSS MUSS MUSS
MUSS MUSS
WE'RE ALL HERE NOW.


FWF
SHP


Several hours earlier...


I'LL GO OVER THE PLAN ONE MORE TIME.
WE WILL DIVIDE INTO TEAMS AND COUNTER THE ENEMY'S ATTACK.

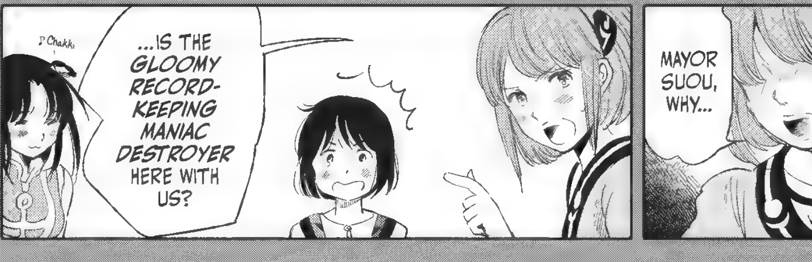

THE POINT IS NOT TO KILL THEM...
...BUT TO DEFEND OUR-SELVES.


OUR GOAL IS TO FEND OFF THE ENEMY...
...AND STAY ALIVE FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.


AND...
...THOSE OF YOU ASSEMBLED HERE WILL CARRY OUT AN IMPORTANT MISSION.
WHILE WE ARE DEFENDING THE MUD WHALE...
...YOU WILL INFILTRATE THE ENEMY VESSEL...
...DESTROY THE NOUS SKYROS...
...AND SINK THE ENEMY BATTLESHIP.
THIS MISSION DEMANDS A QUICK VICTORY.
THE LONGER IT TAKES, THE GREATER THE SACRIFICE WILL BE ON THE MUD WHALE...
...BECAUSE THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN OUR FIGHTING ABILITIES.
ALSO, THE ASSAULT TEAM WILL BE LAUNCHING THEMSELVES INTO THE MIDST OF THE ENEMY...
...WHICH IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

SO I'VE ASSEMBLED THOSE OF YOU WITH HIGH THYMIA ABILITIES...

SOME OF YOU EVEN VOLUNTEERED.






HERE'S THE ARMOR WE MADE FROM SAND ARMADILLO SCALES!
ALL THE UNMARKED WORKED TOGETHER TO MAKE IT.
THERE WASN'T ENOUGH, SO NOT EVERYONE ON THE MUD WHALE HAS ONE.


WEAR IT UNDER YOUR CLOTHES.
...


AND THIS IS AN AMULET I MADE OUT OF OOMASA-GOCHIKU LEAVES...
IT'S USUALLY WORN AS PROTECTION ON HUNTS OR SCAVENGING TRIPS ON THE SEA OF SAND.


WOW, SO DELICATE.
SWAY
I MADE ONE FOR EVERY-ONE, SO PLEASE WEAR IT ON YOUR ARM.


SUOU PULLED AN ALL-NIGHTER?!
STAGGER

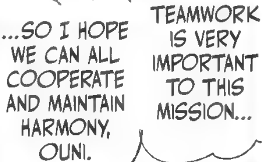

MAYOR SUOU...


DON'T WANT IT.


GRAB


I'M TOKUSA, LEADER OF VIGILANTE CORPS TEAM THREE.
I'M 21 YEARS OLD AND SINGLE!
I'LL BE COMMANDING THIS ASSAULT UNIT.


DON'T BE LIKE THAT!
PUT IT ON.
SHUK


TEAMWORK IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THIS MISSION...
...SO I HOPE WE CAN ALL COOPERATE AND MAINTAIN HARMONY, OUNI.

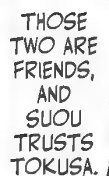

PAT
PAT
PAT
PAT


I'M COUNT-ING ON YOU, TOKU-SA.




REST ASSURED, MAYOR SUOU.
MUSS MUSS MUSS
MUSS MUSS MUSS

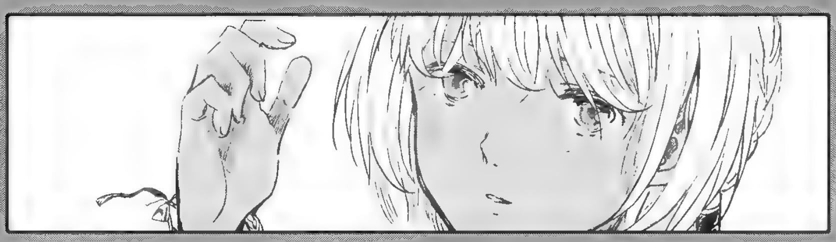

THOSE TWO ARE FRIENDS, AND SUOU TRUSTS TOKUSA.

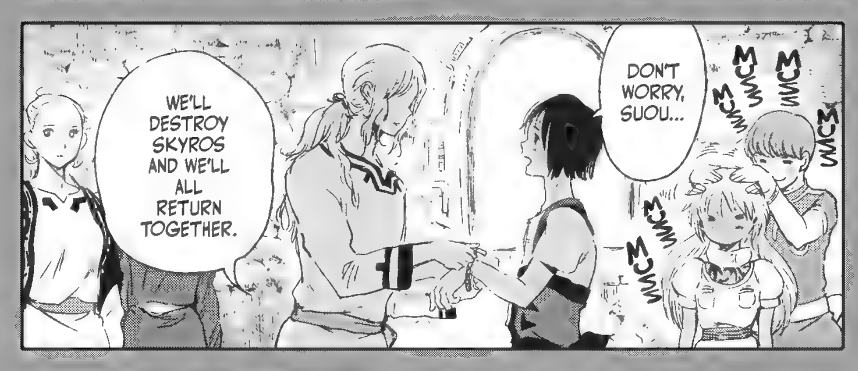



LYKOS...


I'M SURE IT WILL BE HARD TO TURN AGAINST YOUR FORMER COMRADES...
...BUT YOU'RE NOW A CITIZEN OF THE MUD WHALE.


TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF...
...AND MAKE SURE YOU COME BACK ALIVE.




MUSS MUSS MUSS
DON'T WORRY, SUOU...
WE'LL DESTROY SKYROS AND WE'LL ALL RETURN TOGETHER.
MUSS MUSS




THANK YOU, CHAKURO.




NIBI!
I'M COMING TOO.

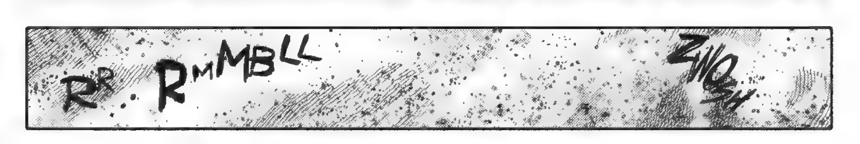

YOU WEREN'T CHOSEN.
STAY BEHIND AND PROTECT KICHA AND THE OTHERS.


NO WAY...
I'M DONE BEING LEFT BEHIND.

I FEEL LIKE IF WE'RE SEPARATED, I'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN.

I'M NOT LEAVING YOU ALONE ANYMORE!







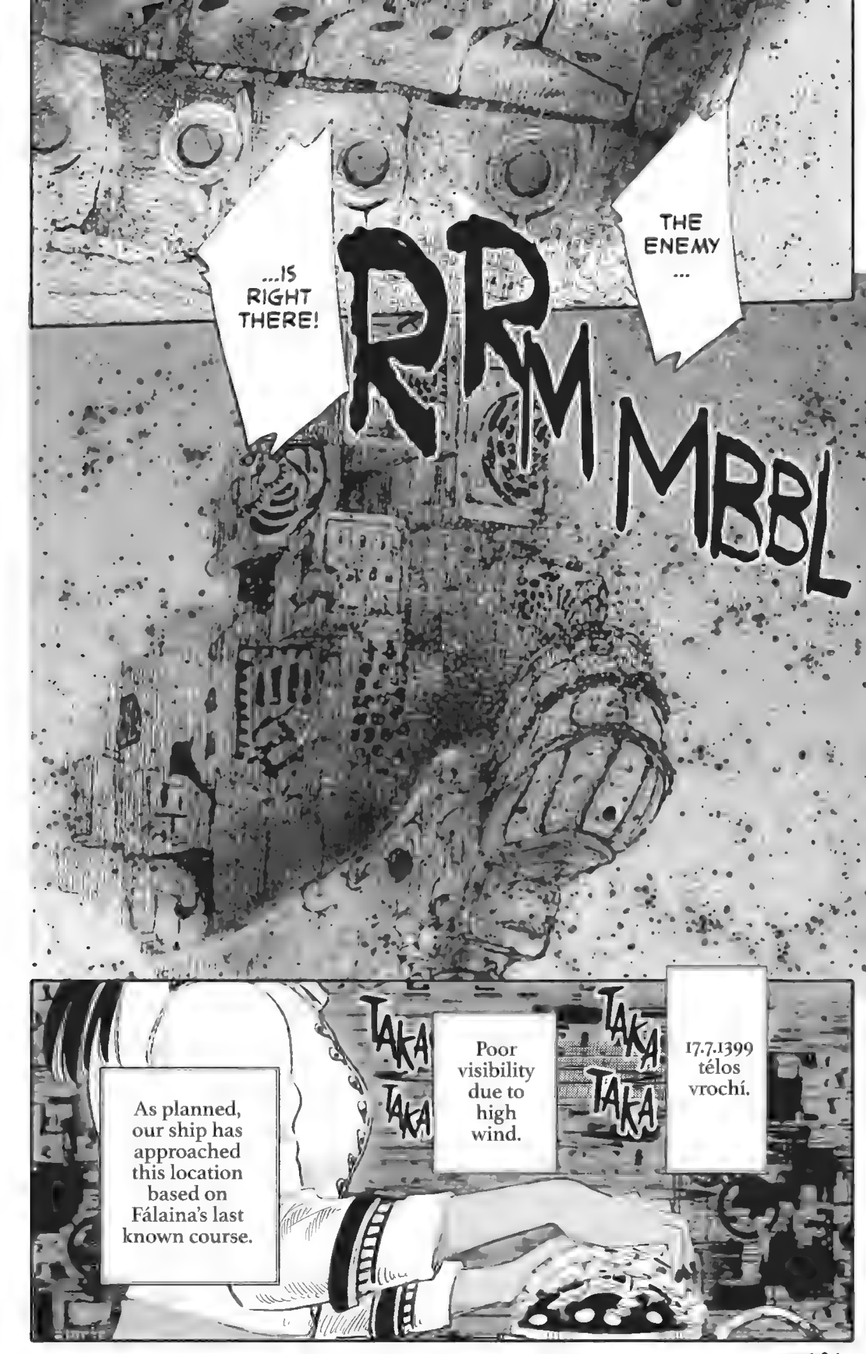

WHAT?

CAN YOU HEAR THAT? THAT ISN'T THE SAND-STORM.

IT'S SLIGHTLY DARKER OVER THERE.

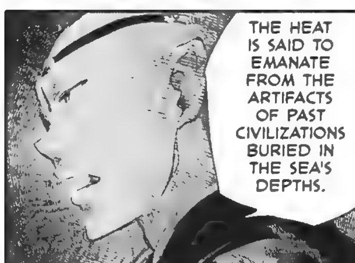
THEY'RE HERE.

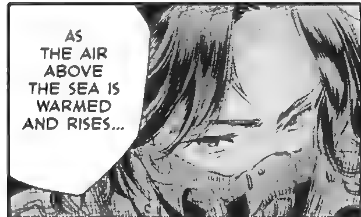
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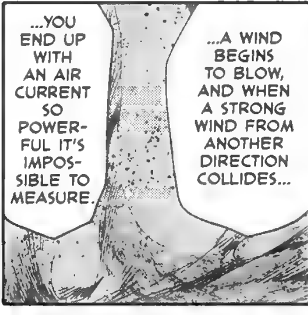

THE ENEMY ...
...IS RIGHT THERE!
RRMMBBL
17.7.1399 télos vrochí.
TAKA TAKA
Poor visibility due to high wind.
TAKA TAKA
As planned, our ship has approached this location based on Fálaina's last known course.

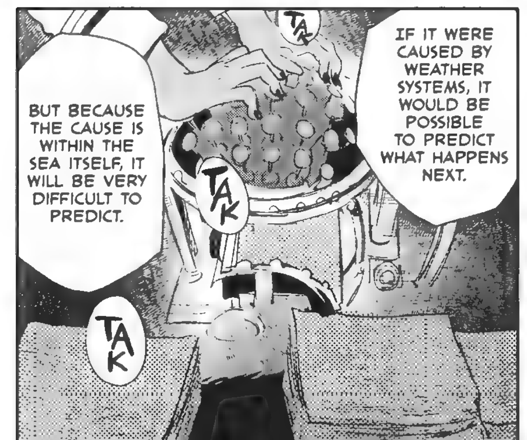

WILL THIS DIE DOWN?


I DON'T KNOW. I'VE BEEN TOLD THIS WEATHER IS PARTICULAR TO THE SEA OF SAND.
AS IF THE SEA OF SAND RUNS A FEVER FROM TIME TO TIME.


THE HEAT IS SAID TO EMANATE FROM THE ARTIFACTS OF PAST CIVILIZATIONS BURIED IN THE SEA'S DEPTHS.


AS THE AIR ABOVE THE SEA IS WARMED AND RISES...

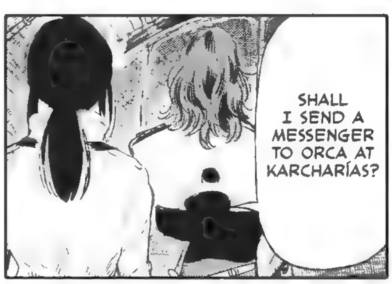

...A WIND BEGINS TO BLOW, AND WHEN A STRONG WIND FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION COLLIDES...
...YOU END UP WITH AN AIR CURRENT SO POWER-FUL IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE TO MEASURE.


TAK
IF IT WERE CAUSED BY WEATHER SYSTEMS, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.
TAK
BUT BECAUSE THE CAUSE IS WITHIN THE SEA ITSELF, IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO PREDICT.
TAK

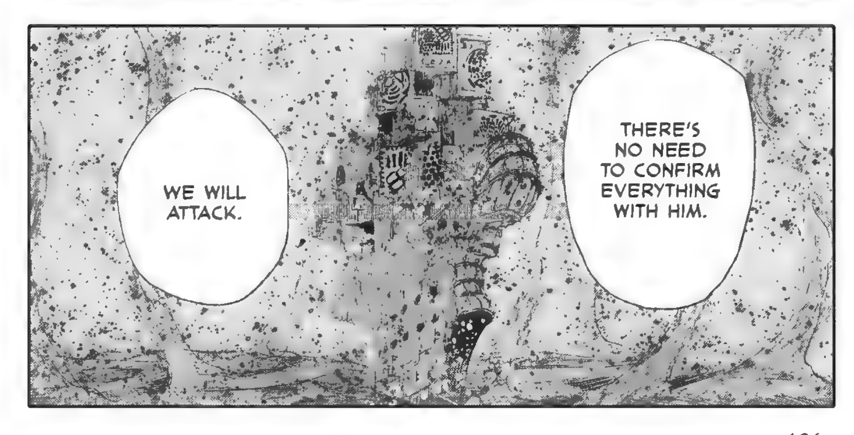
"THIS IS A SEA BORN FROM THE RAINS OF KATHARTÍRIO...

"...SO IT IS NOT SURPRISING FOR A PHENOMENON BEYOND HUMAN UNDER-STANDING TO OCCUR," IT SAYS.

TAK TAK



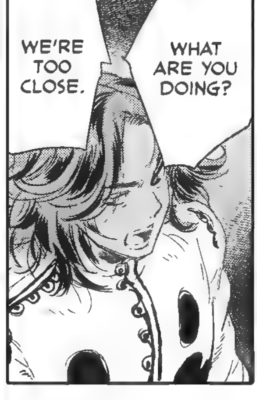




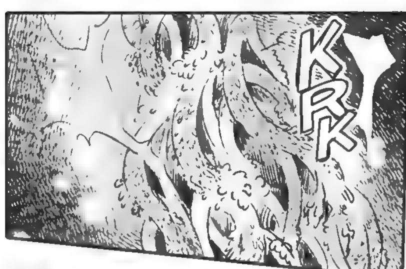

HEY...


YOU'RE GOING TO CRASH!

DON'T YOU SEE IT?

HELM!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WE'RE TOO CLOSE.


OLIVÍNIS!
HARD TO PORT!


KRK


KRKL
KRKL



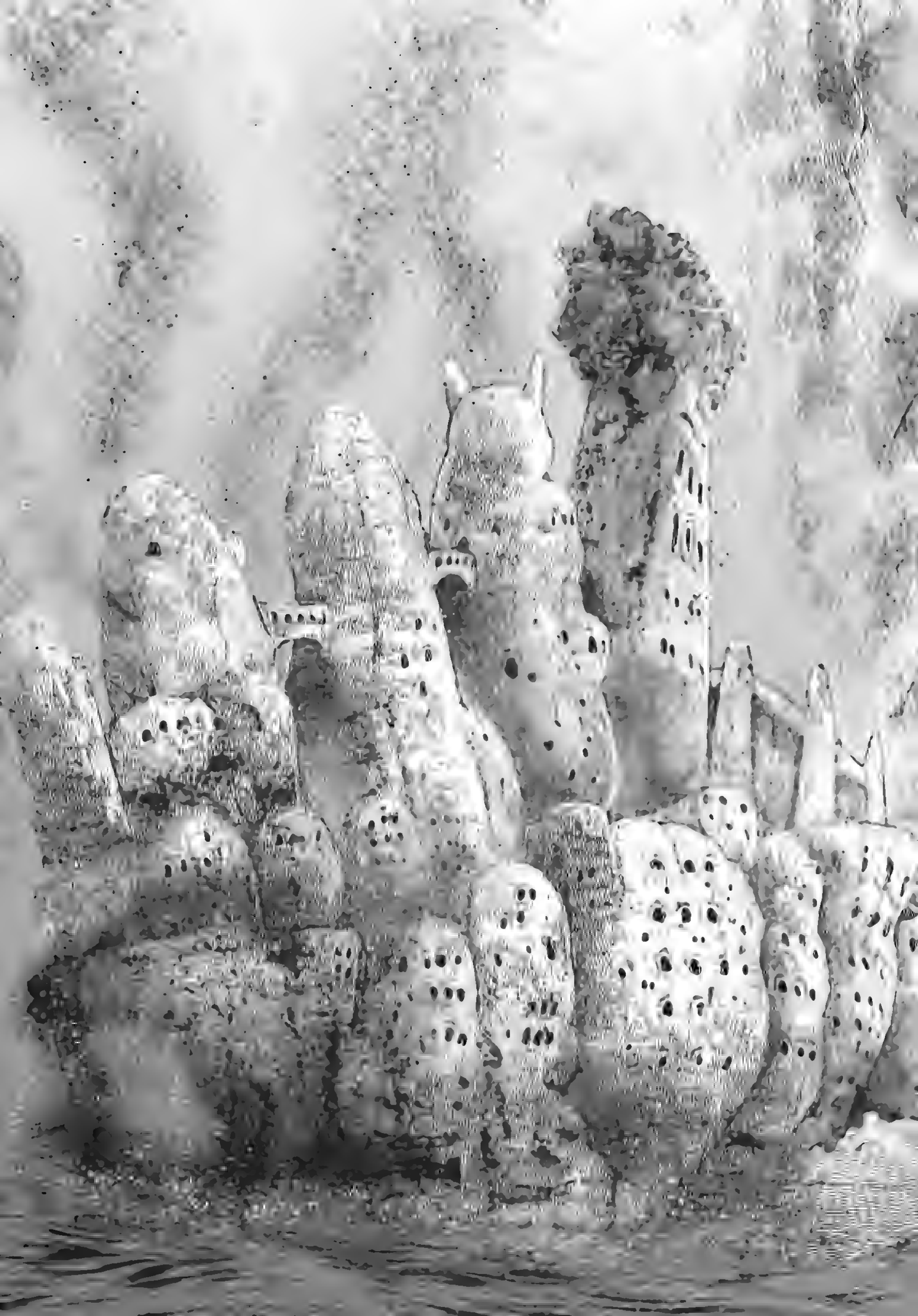

SNAP

Hard... to port.










IT'S OKAY—THEY'RE SWERVING.

WHOAAH!
THEY'RE GOING TO RAM US!

I'M SURE THEY CAN'T MISS IT.
I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE MUD WHALE, BUT OUR MISSION DEPENDS ON SPEED.

THEY'RE REALLY HERE...
I WONDER IF SUOU AND EVERY-ONE ELSE HAS SEEN THEM.

NIBI, THERE'S NO TIME TO TURN BACK...
...SO COME WITH US.

LET'S BOARD WHILE THEY'RE STILL CLOSE.
ZSSH


YANK

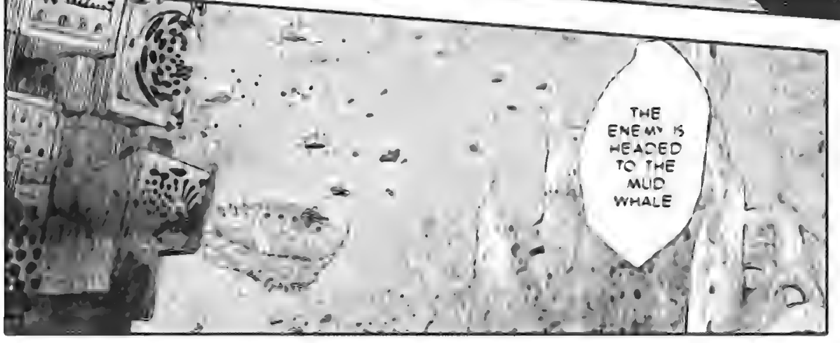
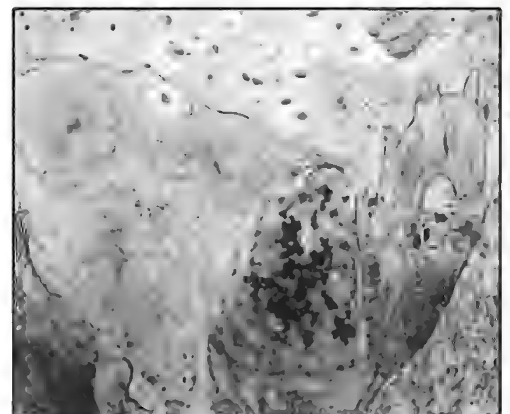

TSSH


TSSH
ANCHOR THE BOATS WITH THYMIA!


WITH SUCH POOR VISIBILITY, THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO SPOT US!
WE ALMOST DON'T NEED THE SAND-COLORED FABRIC WE BROUGHT FOR CAMOUFLAGE.

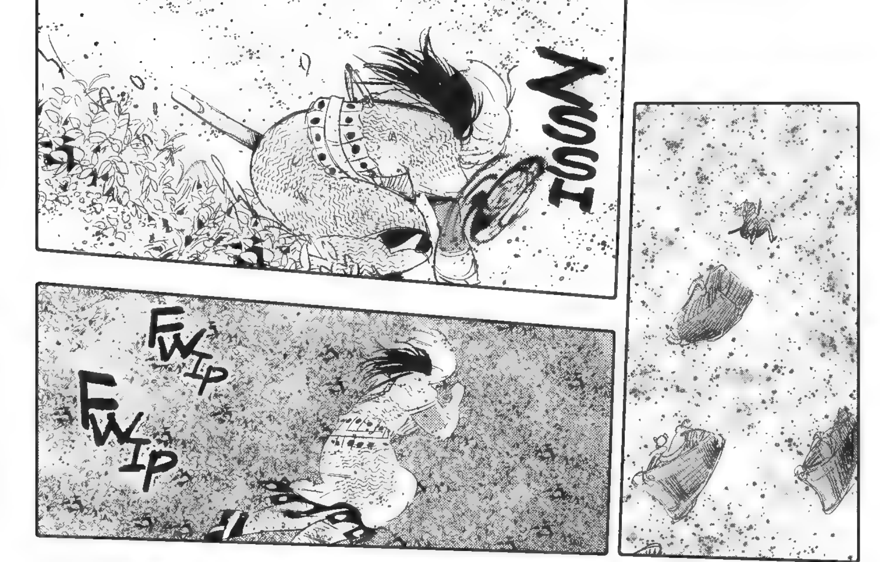

RRMMBL


OHH...

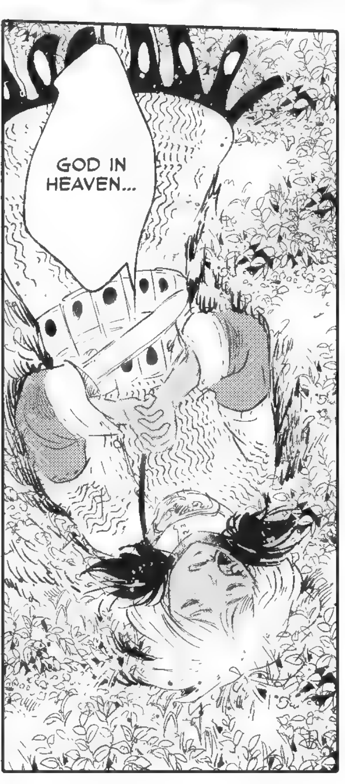

THE ENEMY IS HEADED TO THE MUD WHALE


OH NO...

JUST WAIT...!




FWIP
FWIP


GOD IN HEAVEN...

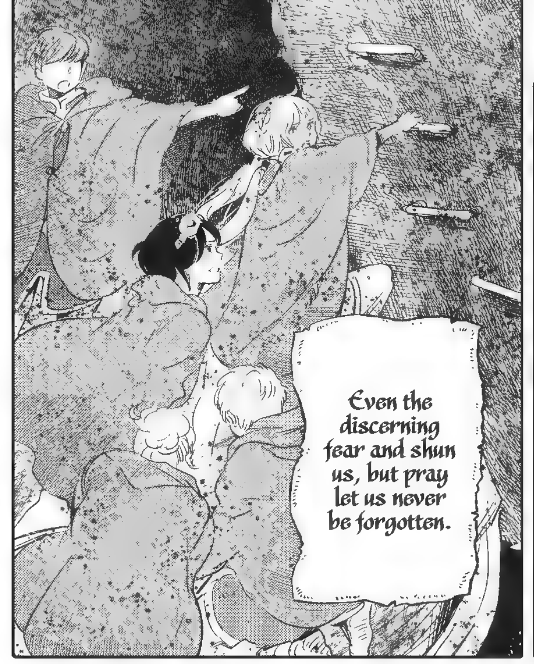

THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME...
...SUCH AMAZING FRIENDS.
DEAR FRIENDS, CRY, LAUGH, RAGE AND FEAR TO YOUR HEARTS' CONTENT...
YOUR EMOTIONS ARE ALL MINE.

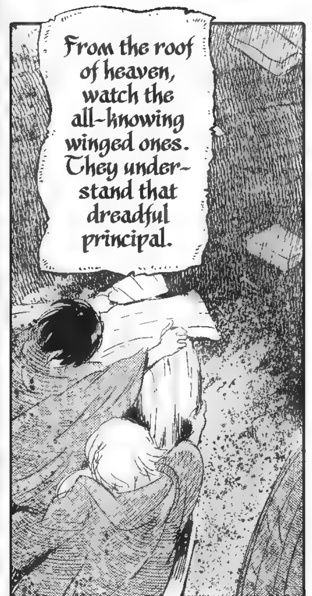
AND SHOW ME...

...YOUR BEST FACES IN DEATH!






Even the discerning fear and shun us, but pray let us never be forgotten.


From the roof of heaven, watch the all-knowing winged ones. They understand that dreadful principal.


JOLT
But behold this sand in our palm. For there you will find lights in the millions.


I CAN GET IN FROM HERE.
The many colors of the world are becoming lost to us.


Departed friends...
We live revered in this forbidden paradise...
...even as your bodies desiccate...
... chained inside coffins, fragmented in the ancient abyss of the sea.
Beyond the Debris of War -The End-



Sketch 6

Clothing

Materials are scarce on the Mud Whale, so clothing is precious. The inhabitants pass down their used clothing, and items are remade again and again and passed through many hands.

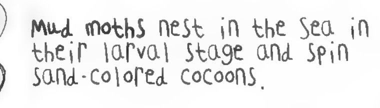
People don't own many clothes, but everyone is supplied with a sand-proof cloak.

The durable cloak is heat insulating and is a necessary item for going out on the Sea of Sand or on days with a strong wind. It's also used as a blanket for sleeping.





Mud moth cocoons are used to make material for the sand-proof cloaks.



Sand sunfish can be seen on stormy days. They are normally bottom-feeders, but they rise to the surface when sandstorms kick up debris from the depths. The people of the Mud Whale sometimes venture out during storms to hunt the sand sunfish.

Sand Flyer:
An unusual, shiny fish that moves by skipping across the surface of the sea.

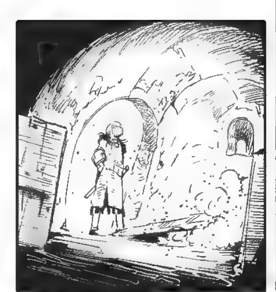
Sand Armadillo:
An odd animal protected by scaled armor. Its eyes have become very weak.

Sand Helmet:
Farmed because their eggs are highly nutritious and tasty.


TROMP
TROMP
TROMP


Chapter 12
War on the Whale

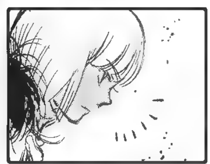

Chapter 12
War on the Whale

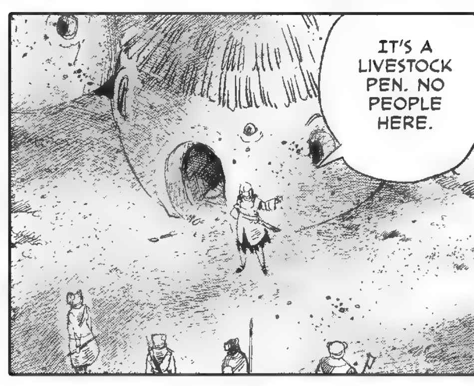



SLAM

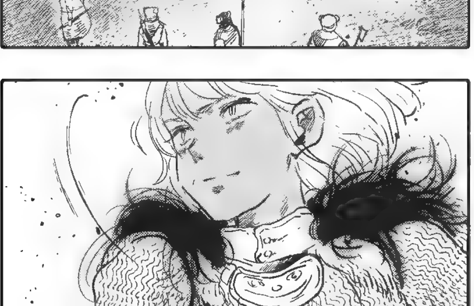

THEY SERIOUSLY EAT STUFF LIKE THIS?
EWW.

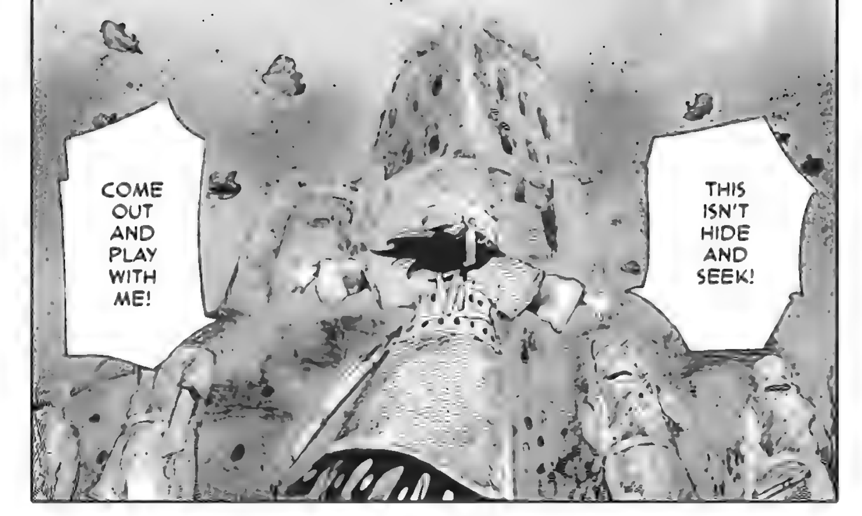
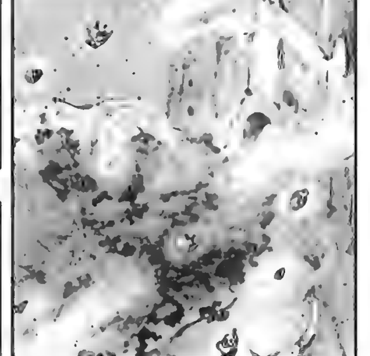
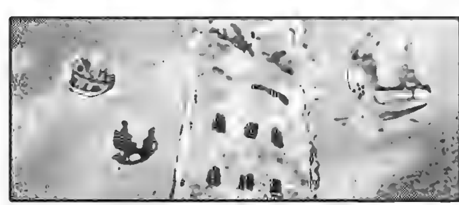





IT'S A LIVESTOCK PEN. NO PEOPLE HERE.

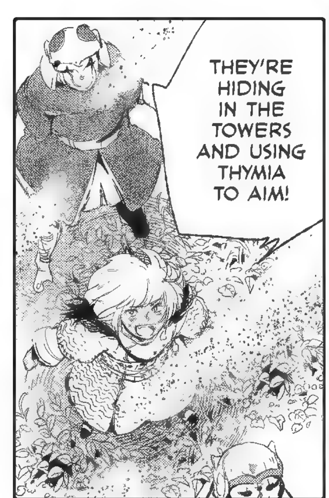

HOW BARBARIC.




THIS ISN'T HIDE AND SEEK!
COME OUT AND PLAY WITH ME!




POOF

!
THWK
THWK
WOB





COMMENCE ATTACK!

THUD

YAAH!

IT WENT DOWN.

I DID IT!

AIMING AT THE ENEMY VEHICLES IS A GOOD STRATEGY.


THWING
THYMIA RELIES ON VISUAL INFORMA-TION...
...SO WE'RE AT AN ADVANTAGE BECAUSE WE'RE HIDDEN.


GRAB THEIR WEAPONS!


CREAK


CRASH

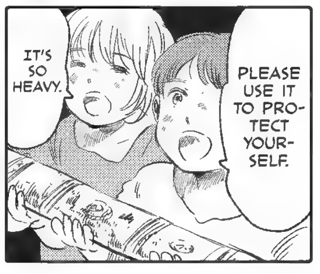

YAHH!
YAHH!

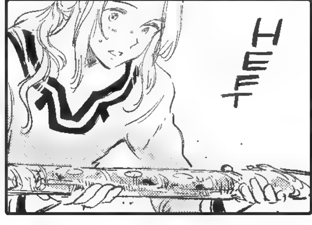

YAHH!
BACK INSIDE, QUICKLY.


MAYOR SUOU!
WE FOUND THIS.


DASH
DASH
WHERE IS MAYOR SUOU?


LET'S GO GET ANOTHER ONE!
OH, WAIT...
...BE CAREFUL.


PLEASE USE IT TO PROTECT YOURSELF.
IT'S SO HEAVY.


HEFT




YAAAAH!
YAAH!
MAYOR SUOU?
BANG BANG
BANG BANG
YAAAH!
YAAH!
BANG BANG

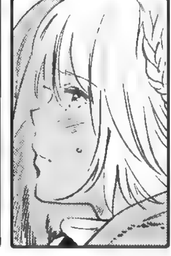
While those who remained on the Mud Whale began to quietly fight under cover of the storm...

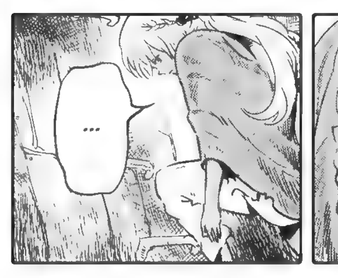
...the 15 of us in the assault team neared the heart of the ship and the Nous Skyros...

...carrying with us everyone's hopes.















NO ONE CAN BEAT ME IN A FISTFIGHT!

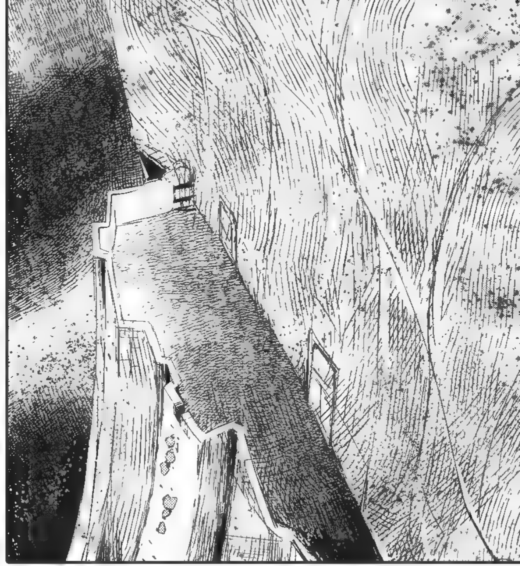
HUP

ME NEITHER!

HUH?

I'M OKAY, ACTUALLY.






ALL RIGHT, GOOD JOB! ♡
OKAY ...
... SHALL WE GO?


I'VE BEEN ON SKYROS SEVERAL TIMES.
IT'S LIKE GOING THROUGH A MAZE TO REACH THE NOUS'S CHAMBER.


CREAK


SO THIS IS SKYROS.
WAIT ...
SKYROS IS MADE FROM DIRT TOO...?

IT'S THE SAME...

THE SHAPE AND COLORS ARE DIFFERENT...

...BUT LYKOS'S SHIP, SKYROS...

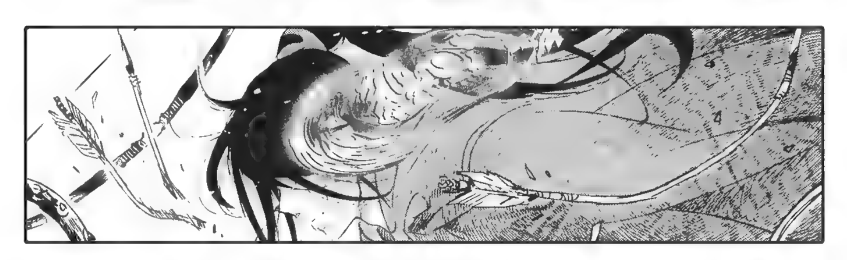
...AND THE MUD WHALE...

...ALL SMELL THE SAME.

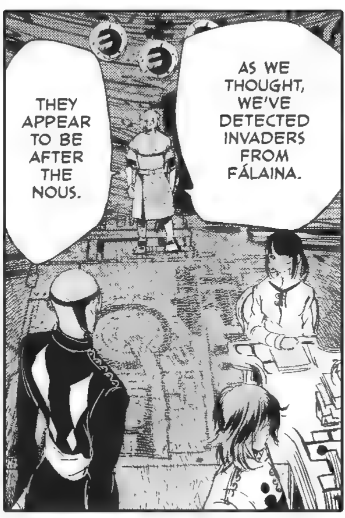
CHA-KURO.


THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE I SAW IN THE NOUS LÝKOS...
...AND THE WORLD NERI SHOWED ME...
THEY BOTH FELT NOSTALGIC.
IT'S...
BUT THEN WHY...
CHAKURO!
THWING
OH!



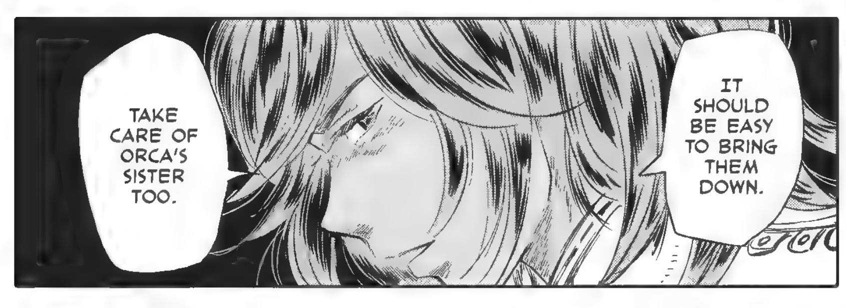


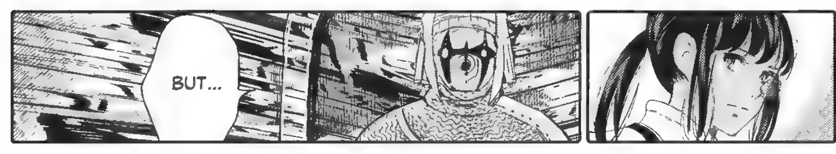
LET'S GO THROUGH THEM.
YEAH!

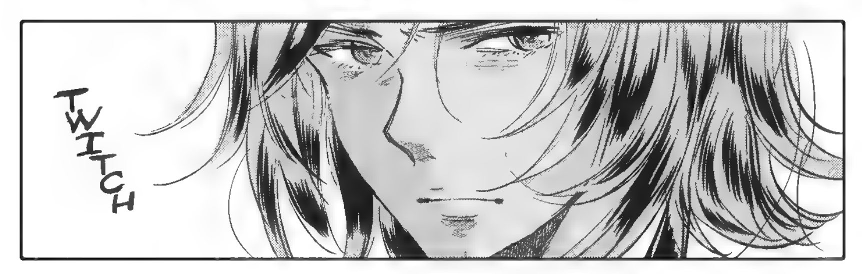

AS WE THOUGHT, WE'VE DETECTED INVADERS FROM FÁLAINA.
THEY APPEAR TO BE AFTER THE NOUS.

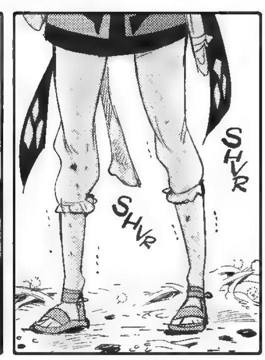

DO YOU THINK COM-MANDER ORCA'S SISTER IS LEADING THEM?
PROB-ABLY.


THEN PER COM-MANDER ORCA'S ORDERS...
...SHOULD WE CAPTURE HIS SISTER?
...


IT SHOULD BE EASY TO BRING THEM DOWN.
TAKE CARE OF ORCA'S SISTER TOO.


BUT...

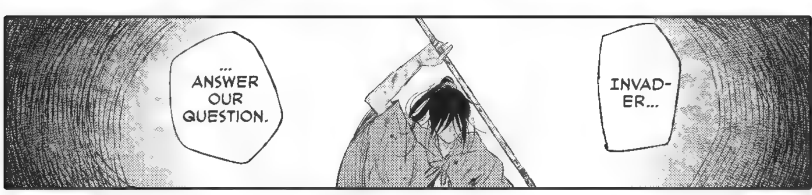

TWITCH


SHVR
SHVR


DON'T JUST STAND THERE.


THIS ISN'T THE MUD WHALE.




INVADER...
... ANSWER OUR QUESTION.


WHO ARE YOU?


TUG
ANSWER ME... ARE YOU...


...THE FÁLAINA DAIMONAS?


DASH
DAIMONAS?

W-WOW.

TONK TONK

OH!

YOU'LL WEAR YOURSELF OUT, PONYTAIL.

LEAVE IT TO US.

YAAH!

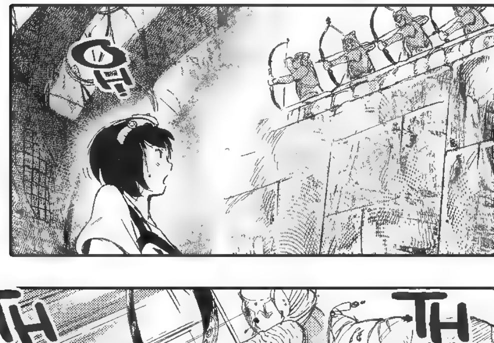
VIGILANTES, LET'S GO!

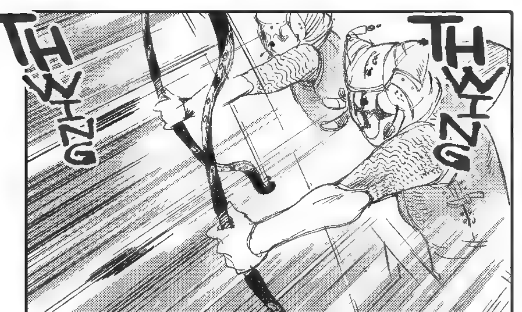
YES, SIR, CAPTAIN TOKUSA.


IT'S SAD, IF IN ORDER TO LIVE...


...WE MUST HURT OTHERS.




OH!


THWING
THWING

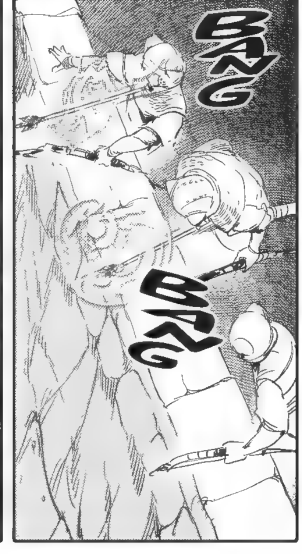

BUT...

I NEVER WANT TO LOSE ANOTHER FRIEND FROM THE MUD WHALE...

...EVER AGAIN.

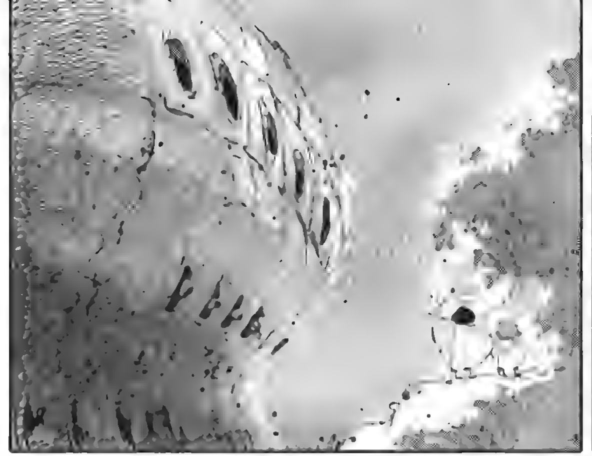
THWING

THWING

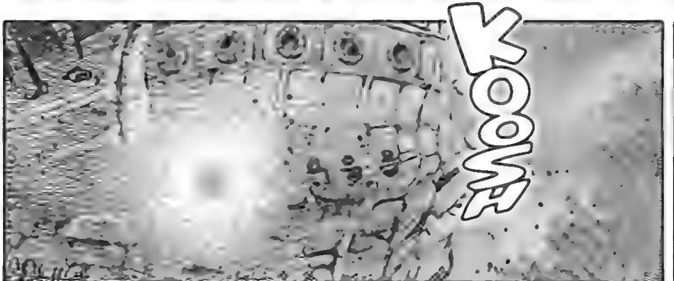





CHAKURO.
HURRY UP! WE WERE DETECTED SOONER THAN I THOUGHT...
THERE WILL BE MORE OF THEM.
OKAY.
I WASN'T MISTAKEN.
THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE...
...HAVE MORE LATENT THYMIA TALENT THAN THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE.

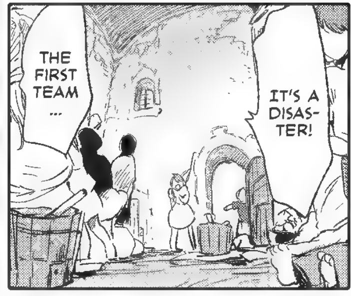


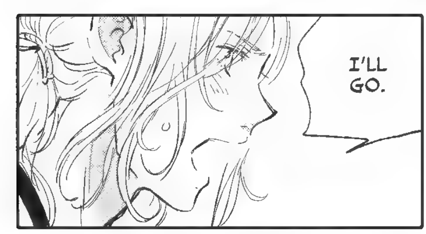

THWING


KOOWA

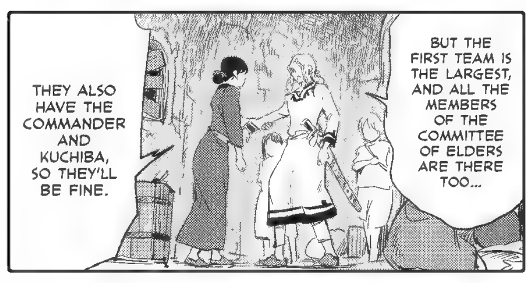

OH

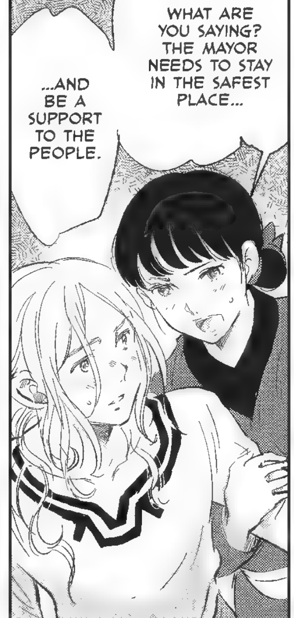

THERE'S A HOLE IN THE CENTRAL TOWER, AND THE ENEMY HAS MADE IT INSIDE.
OH NO...


IT'S A DISASTER!
THE FIRST TEAM ...

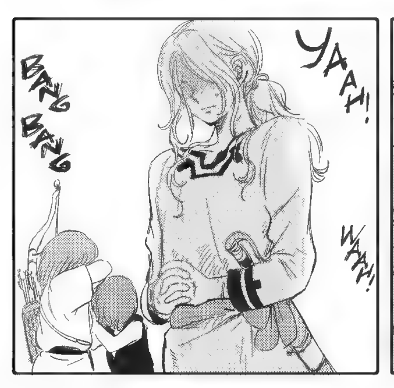

I'LL GO.

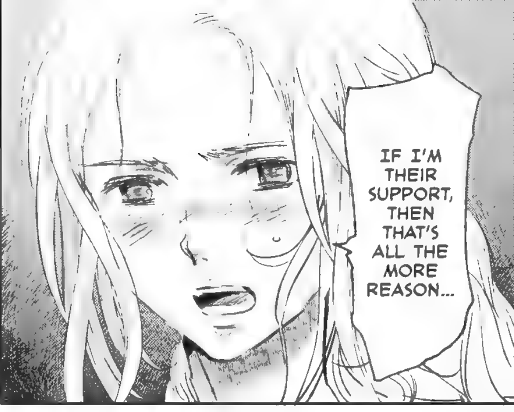

THE STOREHOUSE WHERE THE NONCOMBATANTS ARE SHELTERING HASN'T BEEN BREACHED.
BUT I'M NOT SURE HOW LONG THEY CAN HOLD OUT.


BUT THE FIRST TEAM IS THE LARGEST, AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS ARE THERE TOO...
THEY ALSO HAVE THE COMMANDER AND KUCHIBA, SO THEY'LL BE FINE.

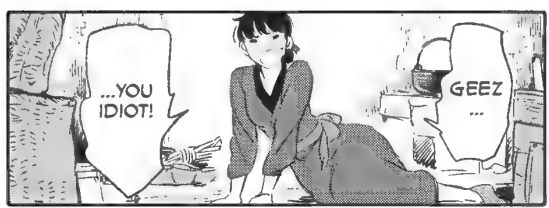

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? THE MAYOR NEEDS TO STAY IN THE SAFEST PLACE...
...AND BE A SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE.

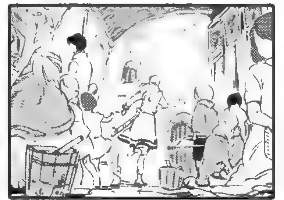


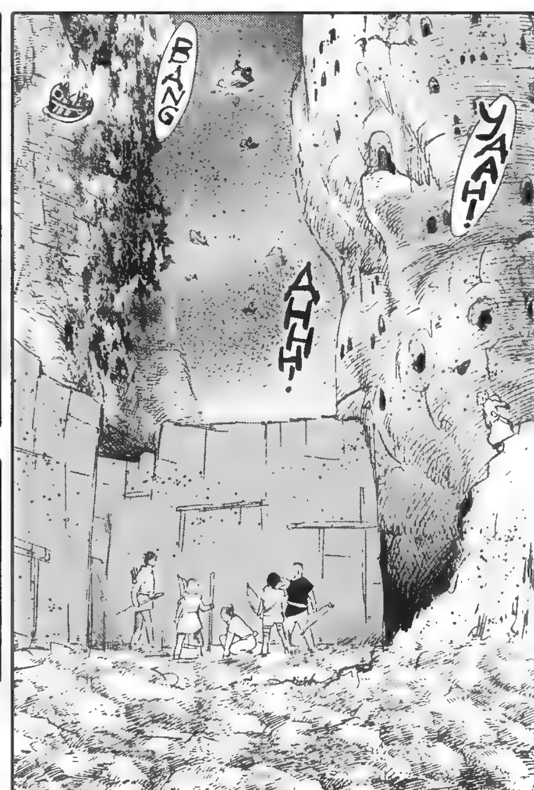

YAAH!
BANG BANG
WAAH!


IF I'M THEIR SUPPORT, THEN THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON...

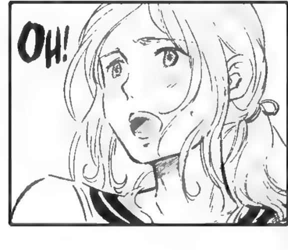

SHOVE
SUOU!


GEEZ ...
...YOU IDIOT!




YAAH!
BANG
AHHH!


DASH DASH


OH!




FLIKA


ELDER HAKUJI ...
EVERYONE, RUN!
WE'LL HAVE REINFORCEMENTS FROM DOWNSTAIRS SOON.


I FORBID YOU TO HURT THE CHILDREN.
BEGONE, YOU DEMONS WHO HAVE LOST YOUR HUMAN HEARTS!




ELDER HAKUJI !!

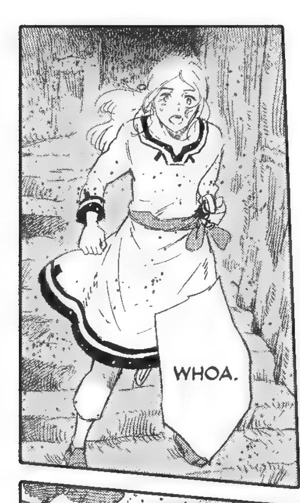




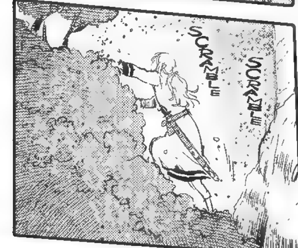

!

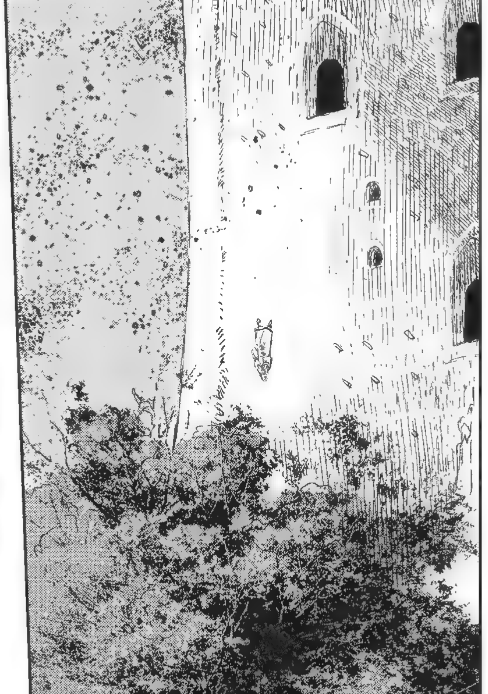

SHOVE


AHHHHH!


WHOA.

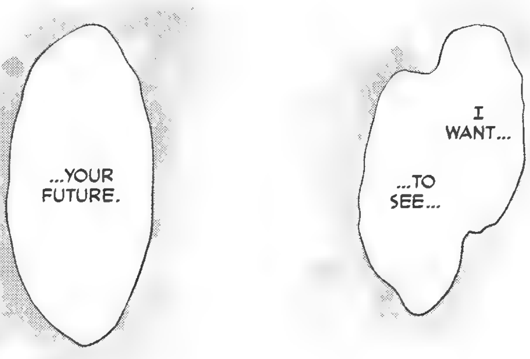

ELDER HAKUJI!!


SCRAMBLE
SCRAMBLE



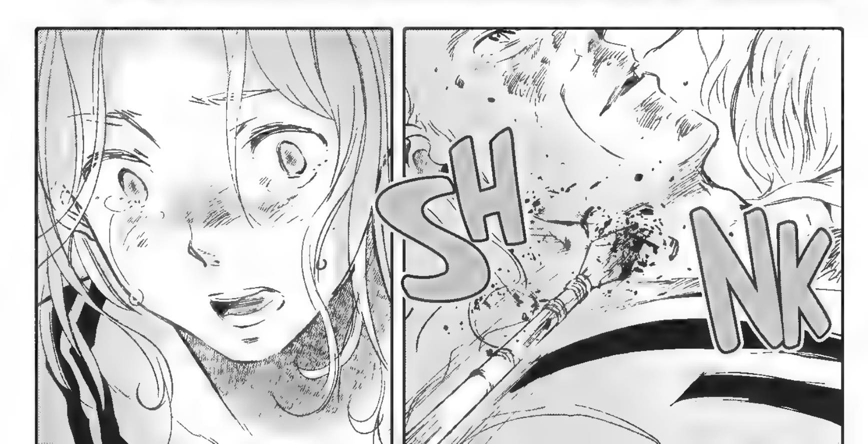

ELDER HAKUJI ...!

I WAS WRONG ...
...TO TRY AND SINK...
...THIS ISLAND.
RIP
SU... OU.
DON'T SPEAK ...
LET'S GET YOU TO THE INFIRMARY.



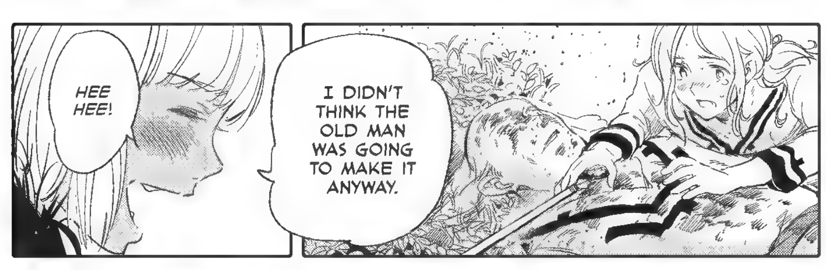

LIVE...
EVEN IF THE WORLD...
...HATES YOU...


I TRULY LOVED... THE MUD WHALE... AND EVERY-ONE...


SHNK


WERE YOU STILL TALKING?
I FOUND YOUR BOW OVER THERE, SO I THOUGHT I'D TEST IT OUT.

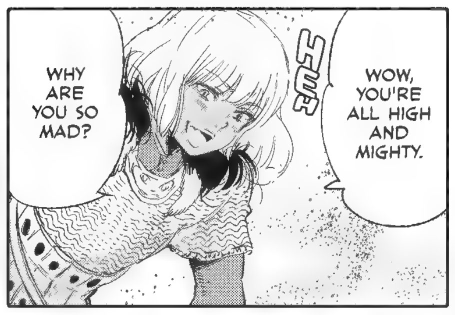

YAAH!
AHH!
OH, SORRY.


I DIDN'T THINK THE OLD MAN WAS GOING TO MAKE IT ANYWAY.
HEE HEE!


SHUT UP.


AHA HA HA HA!


I DON'T SEE AN AURA...
CAN'T YOU USE IT?


HEH
WOW, YOU'RE ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY.
WHY ARE YOU SO MAD?


YAAH
YAAH
YOU'VE GOT A STOLEN SWORD TOO.
IF YOU WANT TO AVENGE GRANDPA...
...GO AHEAD...
...PULL IT OUT.


OH GOODIE!

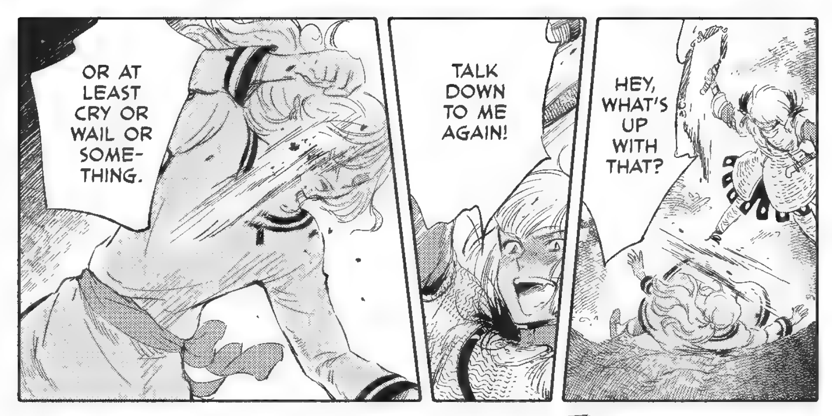



SHA


THAT'S GREAT!
CLANK
I LOVE THOSE EYES.


SHNK


THUD


HEY, WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?
TALK DOWN TO ME AGAIN!
OR AT LEAST CRY OR WAIL OR SOME-THING.

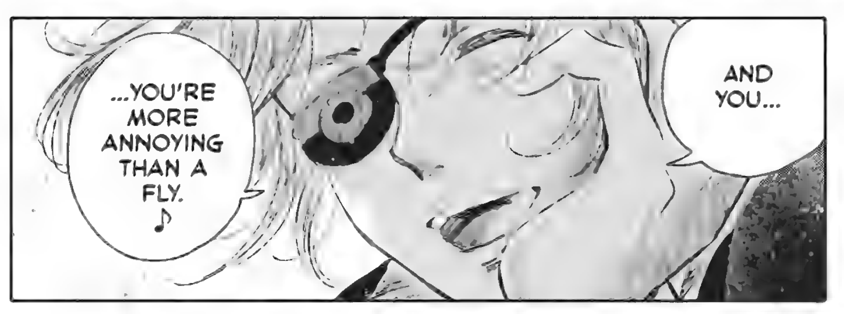

WHAT IS IT...
...WITH THOSE DOLL EYES?
I'M BORED OF YOU DOLLS...
YOU PEOPLE CHOSE EMOTIONS, RIGHT?
YOU'RE AUTONO-MOUS CRIMINALS, RIGHT?!


THAT'S LIBERATING...
YOU WANTED FREEDOM, RIGHT?!
FWAAA

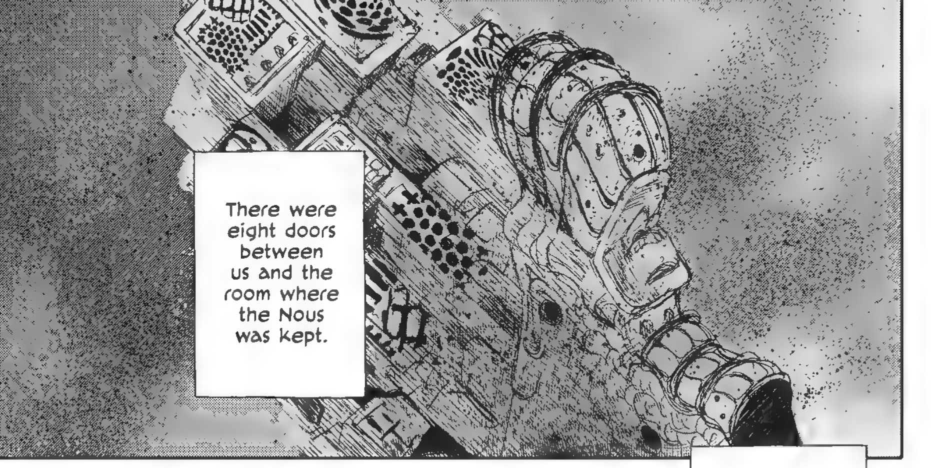
EVERYONE HERE ACTS LIKE THEY'RE DEAD. IT'S SO BORING!
I'M NOT THE CRAZY ONE— THE WORLD IS CRAZY.

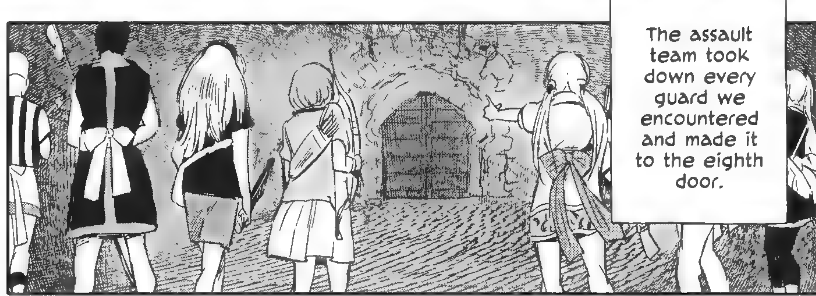

THAT'S RIGHT...
THE WORLD IS CRAZY.


BUT THAT KID IS MORE OR LESS MY BOSS...
...SO LAY OFF HIM, WILL YOU?

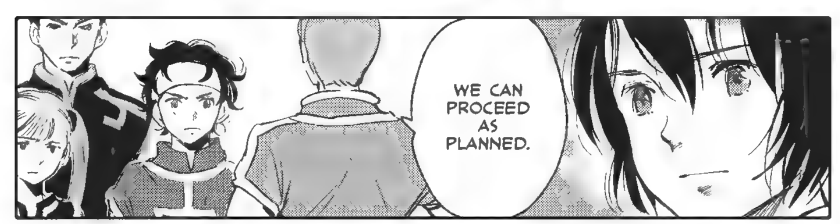

STAGGER

AND YOU...
...YOU'RE MORE ANNOYING THAN A FLY. ♪

REALLY?


There were eight doors between us and the room where the Nous was kept.

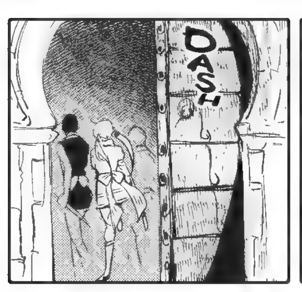

The assault team took down every guard we encountered and made it to the eighth door.

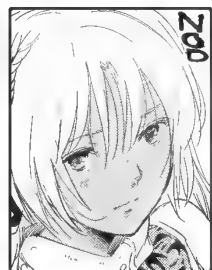

Beyond that was the Belly, where thymia couldn't be used.
GOOD JOB, EVERY-ONE!
WE MADE IT THIS FAR WITHOUT LOSING ANYONE.
MUSS MUSS MUSS MUSS


WE CAN PROCEED AS PLANNED.


THE SUPER-STRONG GUYS WILL GO WITH US TO DESTROY THE NOUS, WITH LYKOS AS A GUIDE.
OKAY?


OUNI AND HIS TEAM WILL USE THYMIA TO GUARD THE DOOR.


DASH


NOD


LYKOS, BE CARE-FUL.



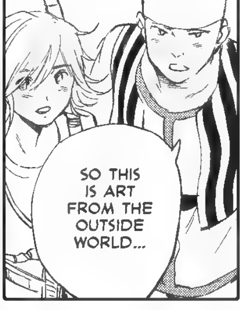
WOW.

THE GLASS IS PAINTED.

SO BEAUTIFUL...

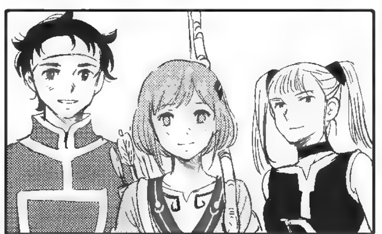
ARE THEY PICTURES OF GOD?









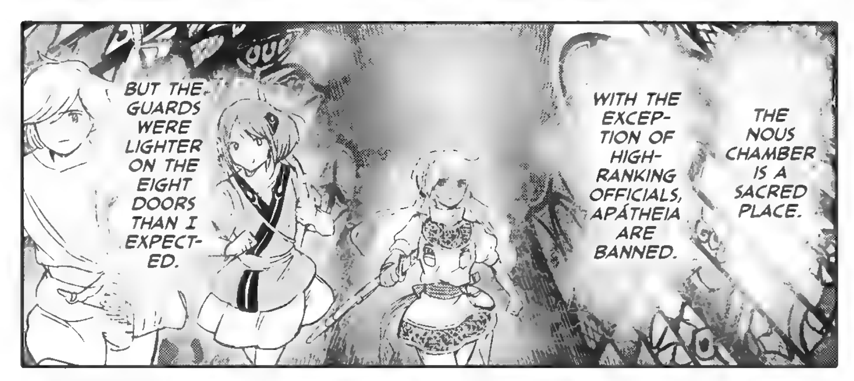



RAH
OKAY, THEY'RE WAITING FOR US!
YEAH!


OUCH.
SHOVE
LET'S HURRY UP, HERO!

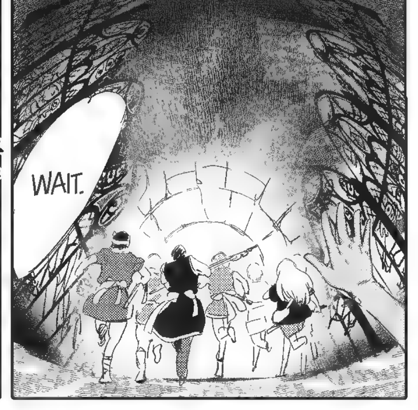

SOME-THING'S BOTHER-ING ME.


IT REALLY ECHOES IN HERE.
KIIIN
SHSSH!
WHOOOO!

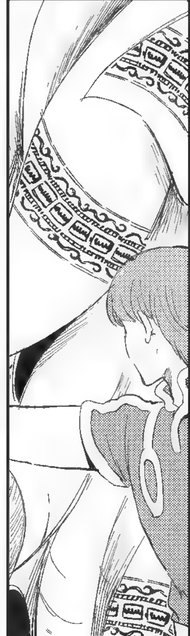

BUT THE GUARDS WERE LIGHTER ON THE EIGHT DOORS THAN I EXPECT-ED.
WITH THE EXCEP-TION OF HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS, APÁTHEIA ARE BANNED.
THE NOUS CHAMBER IS A SACRED PLACE.


IT'S BEHIND THAT CLOTH.


AND THEY HAVEN'T FOL-LOWED US.


KIIIN
DON'T RUSH...
TOKUSA, EVERYONE.

WAIT.

THEY CAN'T HEAR ME BECAUSE OF THE ECHOES.

NO.


TUG

URUMI, DON'T GO IN YET.
HUH?


THE ENEMY KNOWS WE'VE GONE THROUGH THE DOOR...
...BUT THEY HAVEN'T ATTACKED. IT'S WEIRD.
THEY'RE PROBABLY SCARED OF OUNI.

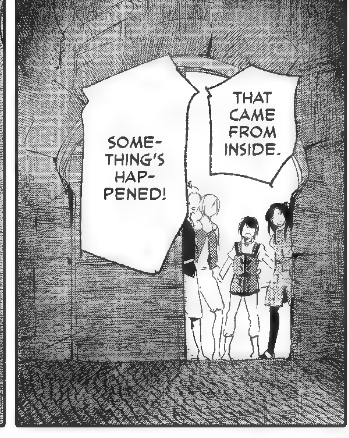

NIBI.


ARE YOU HURT?
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING?


HOW CAN I SAY THAT I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO MESSED UP?
I FORCED YOU TO BRING ME, AND IT'S JUST NOT COOL IF I HOLD YOU UP...

YOU IDIOT.


BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG
OH!


THAT CAME FROM INSIDE.
SOMETHING'S HAPPENED!

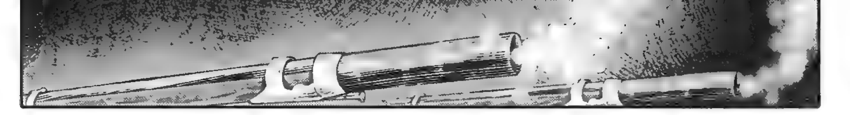

DASH
OUNI!


WAIT.
YOU'RE HURT—STAY BACK.


CHAKKI, GO INSTEAD.
GOT IT.


WILL YOU BE OKAY, GINSHU?

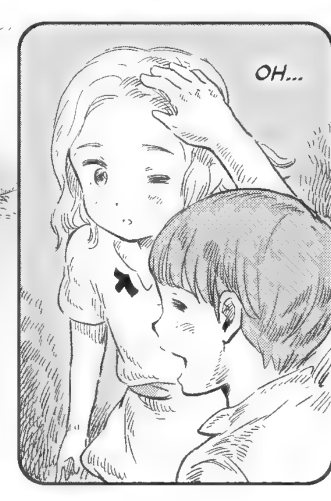
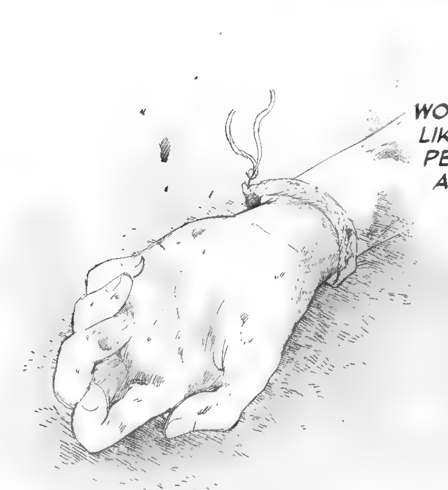

THAT'S *MISS* GINSHU!
WE CAN'T LEAVE THIS UNPROTECTED.
I WON'T LET ANYONE THROUGH.

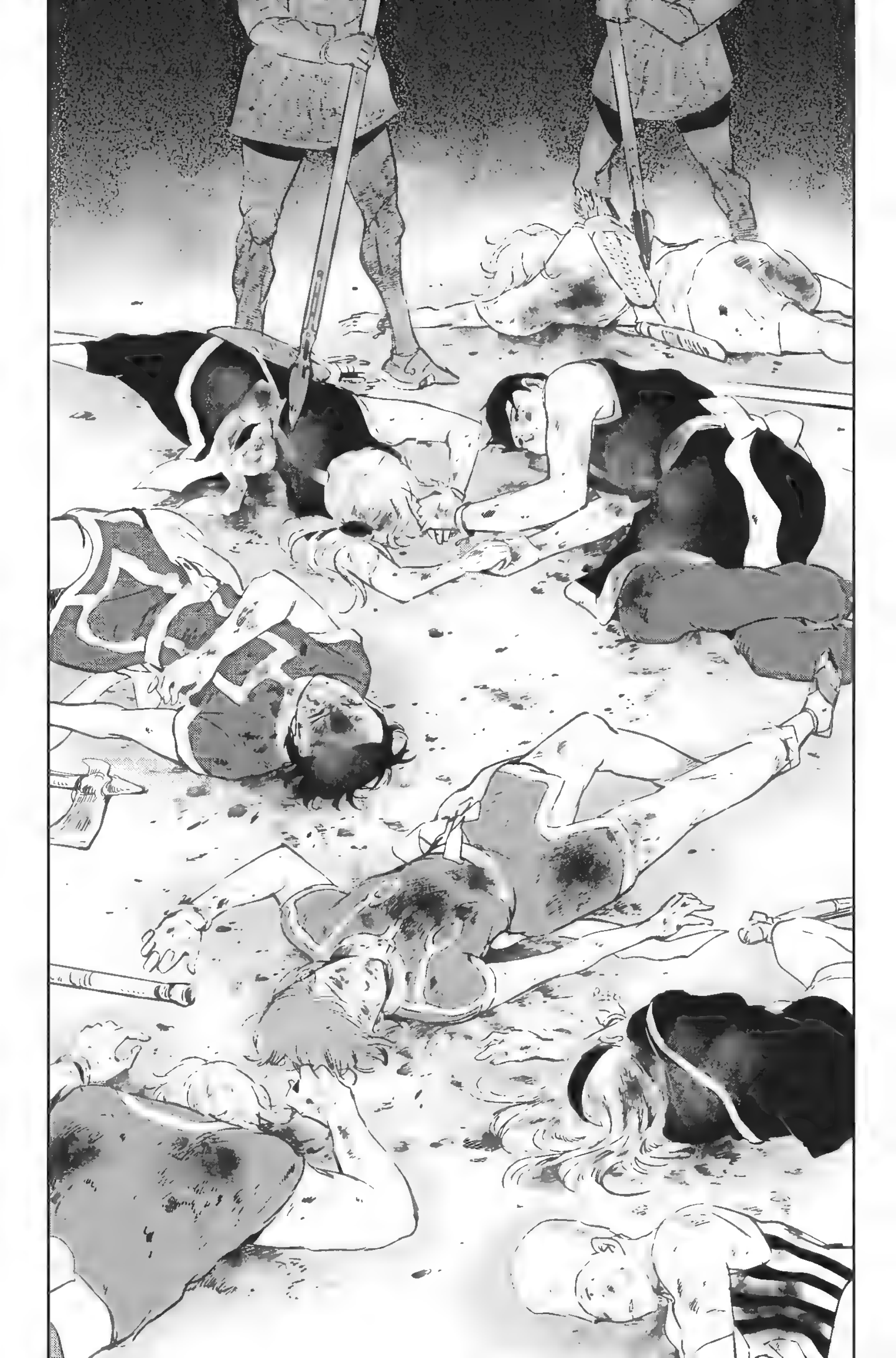




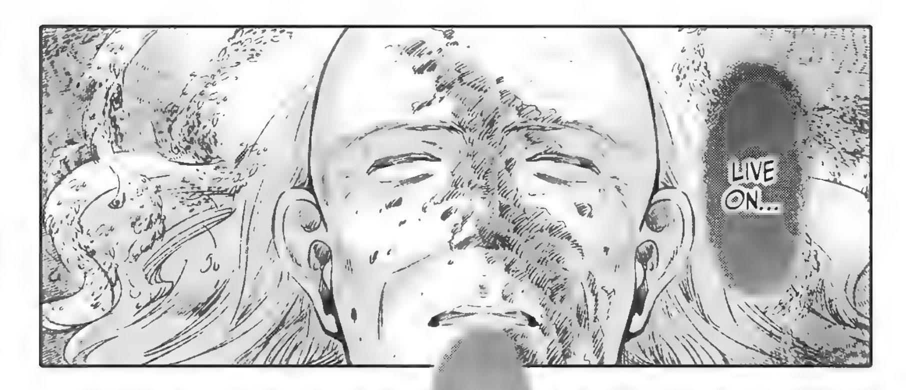

OWW...
THAT
HURTS.

THUD

SORRY,
MAYOR
SUOU...
I FAILED.

OH...

I
WOULD'VE
LIKED TO
PET YOU
AGAIN.




I WANT...
...TO SEE YOUR FUTURE.



War on the Whale -The End-

Children of the Whales volume 3 -The End-

Afterword
Songs ♪ of Children of the Whales





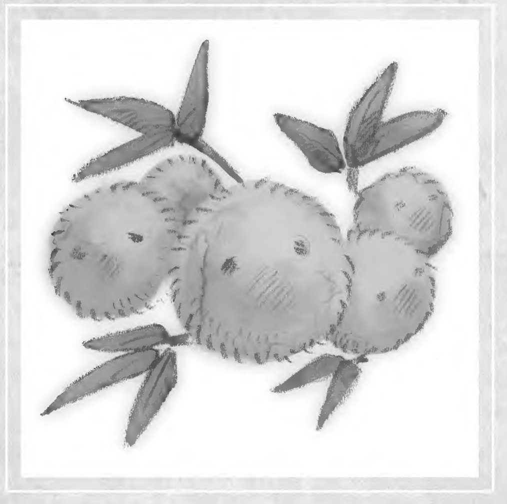
*Oldest collection of Japanese poetry.

Songs of Children of the Whales -The End-

A Note on Names

Those who live on the Mud Whale are named after colors in a language unknown. Abi Umeda uses Japanese translations of the names, which we have maintained. Here is a list of the English equivalents for the curious.

Aijiro	pale blue
Benihi	scarlet
Buki	kerria flower (*yamabuki*)
Chakuro	blackish brown (*cha* = brown, *kuro* = black)
Ginshu	vermillion
Hakuji	porcelain white
Jiki	golden
Kicha	yellowish brown
Kuchiba	decayed-leaf brown
Masoh	cinnabar
Neri	silk white
Nezu	mouse gray
Nibi	dark gray
Ouni	safflower red
Rasha	darkest blue, nearly black
Ro	lacquer black
Sami	light green (*asa* = light, *midori* = green)
Shinono	the color of dawn (*shinonome*)
Sienna	reddish brown
Suou	raspberry red
Taisha	red ocher
Tobi	reddish brown like a kite's feather
Tokusa	scouring rush green
Urumi	muddy gray



The top of Tower 3 is my recommended spot on the Mud Whale. Chakuro is there a lot. It's especially pretty at sunset.

—Abi Umeda

ABI UMEDA debuted as a manga creator with the one-shot "Yukokugendan" in *Weekly Shonen Champion. Children of the Whales* is her eighth manga work.



VOLUME 3
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